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THE CULT OF ST NICHOLAS IN MEDIEVAL ITALY

VOLUME 1 OF 3

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ABSTRACT

St Nicholas was one of the most popular saints in medieval Italy. His cult attracted the attention of popes, kings and emperors, and his shrine at Bari became an important international pilgrimage destination. This thesis asks how the cult of St Nicholas came to be so widespread and popular in Italy, and why the saint attracted the attention of diverse groups and individuals.

This thesis is structured around four chapters. The first demonstrates that through a process of Latinisation the cult of St Nicholas became integrated within Italian literary traditions and within a new spiritual era. Chapter Two reveals that this Latinisation also occurred within the saint's iconography. Chapters Three and Four are case studies of the cult in Puglia and Venice, locations which claimed possession of the saint's relics. These case studies show that the general developments that the cult of St Nicholas underwent in Italy, identified in Chapters One and Two, did not apply universally. Instead, the presence of the saint's relics resulted in a different profile of the saint in Bari and Venice. Through the process of Latinisation, the cult of St Nicholas became updated and remained relevant for its new Italian audience; Chapters Three and Four show alternative ways that the cult of St Nicholas gained widespread popularity.

This thesis presents for the first time an iconographical study of St Nicholas in Italian art, which develops existing research of the saint's Byzantine iconography. Chapter Four presents a profile of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice in the Middle Ages, which is a significant oversight in the literature. The thesis uses a variety of visual and textual sources, in particular fresco and altarpiece representations, archival documents from Venice and Rome (including the Apostolic Visitations), and under-exploited contemporary and antiquarian Venetian sources.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AASS	*Acta Sanctorum*
AB	*The Art Bulletin*
AHR	*The American Historical Review*
AJA	*The American Journal of Archaeology and the History of the Fine Arts*
ASD	*Archivio Storico per la Dalmazia*
ASFg	Foligno, Archivio di Stato
ASP	*Archivio Storico Pugliese*
ASV	Venice, Archivio di Stato
ASVat	Vatican, Archivio Segreto
BAV	Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica
BF	*Bolletino della città di Foligno*
BHG	*Biblioteca Hagiographica Graeca*
BHL	*Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina Antiquae et Mediae Aetatis* vols 1-2 (Brussels: Society of Bollandists, 1898-99).
BHLSub.Hag.	*Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina Antiquae et Mediae Aetatis, Subsidia Hagiographica* 6 (Brussels: Society of Bollandists, 1898-1911).
BM	*The Burlington Magazine*
BMV	Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana
CDB	*Codice Diplomatico Barese*
CSHB	*Corpus Scriptores Historiae Byzantinae*
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*

EFM	*Etnografia e Folklore del Mare. Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Etnografia e Folklore del Mare, Napoli, 1954*
EHR	*The English Historical Review*
HTR	*The Harvard Theological Review*
Italia Sacra	Ferdinando Ughelli, *Italia Sacra: sive de Episcopis Italiae et insularum adiacentium*, *rebusque ab iis praeclare gestis, deducta serie ad nostram usque aetatem. Opus singulare provinciis xx. distinctum, in quo ecclesiarum origines, urbium conditiones, principum donations, recondite monumenta in lucem proferuntur* vols 1-9, ed. Nicolai Coleti (Venice: Sebatianum Coleti, 1717-22, 2nd edition).
IVSLA	*Atti dell'Istituto Veneto di Scienza, Lettere ed Arti*
JEccH	*The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JEH	*The Journal of Economic History*
JQR	*The Jewish Quarterly Review*
JR	*The Journal of Religion*
JSAH	*Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*
Λόγος εἰς τήν ἀνακομιδήν	*Λόγος εἰς τήν ἀνακομιδήν τοῦ λειψάνου τοῦ ὁσίου πατρός ἡμῶν καί θαυματουργοῦ Νικολάου* [=] 'Narration of the Recovery of the Relics of our Holy Father and Wonder-Worker Nicholas', in *The Translation of Saint Nicholas: An Anonymous Greek Account of the Transfer of the Body of St Nicholas from Myra in Lycia to Bari in Italy*, trans. J. Mc Ginley and Herbert Musurillo (Bari: Gerardo Cioffari, 1980).
MAH	*Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*

MCV	Venice, Museo Civico Correr
MMAB	*The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*
PG	*Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Graeca*
PICA	Princeton Index of Christian Art
PL	*Patrologia Latina Cursus Completus*
QM	*Quaderni Medievali*
QSV	*Quaderni della Soprintendenza ai beni artistici e storici di Venezia*
RACAR	*Revue d'Art Canadienne/Canadian Art Review*
RBN	*Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici*
RHC	*Recuil des historiens des Croisades, historiens occidentaux*
RIS	*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*
RJK	*Romisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*
RRIA	*Rivista del Reale Istituto di Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte*
SEER	*The Slavonic and East European Review*
TAPS	*Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*
WJK	*Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*
ZK	*Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*

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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

When Pope Nicholas III died in the year 1280, he was buried in a chapel dedicated to St Nicholas at Old St Peters, Rome. The chapel, which Nicholas III himself had built, was located on the right-hand side of the nave and contained an altar which the pope had personally consecrated.[1] According to an inventory recorded in the *Libro dei Benefattori*, Nicholas III made many generous donations to the altar, including gifts of silverware, silk vestments and two villages.[2] The tomb in which the pope was buried displayed a polished stone effigy and a fresco. This fresco, which does not survive, represented Pope Nicholas III being led upwards by St Nicholas, while being pushed from below by St Francis.[3]

In southern Italy at the end of the thirteenth century, the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari, the resting place of the saint following the 1087 translation of his relics there from Myra in south-west Turkey,[4] was repeatedly endowed with land and precious gifts from the Angevin kings of Naples. King Charles I (1226-85) declared the church of S. Nicola a royal monument in gratitude

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[1] As recorded in an inventory of Pope Nicholas III's gifts to the church of St Peter in the *Libro dei Benefattori*: 'Anno Domini ducentesimo LXXX mense Augusti die XXII obit sanctiss mem. Dns. Nicolaus Papa Tertius natione Romanus de Domo Ursinorum, qui in Basilica nostra beneficiatos XXX instituit, et in eadem ad honorem Beati Nicolai altare erigi fecit quod propriis manibus consecravit, iuxta quod sepulturam suam elegit.' For the inventory and an English translation, see Archaeological Institute of America, ed., 'Gifts of Pope Nicholas III († 1280) to the Basilica of San Pietro in Vaticano', *AJA* 4, no. 3 (Sept. 1888), pp. 326-28. For the chapel of St Nicholas, see Julian Gardner, 'Nicholas III's Oratory of the Sancta Sanctorum and Its Decoration', *BM* 115, no. 842 (May 1973), p. 292, fn. 55. Gardner's source for the chapel is Ptolomaeus Luccensis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, in *RIS* 11, ed. Ludovico Antonio Muratori (Milan: Mediolani, 1729), col. 1181.

[2] For example, the *Libro dei Benefattori* inventory states: 'Cui altari crucem eum pede argenti, duo candelabra argenti, duo bacilia argenti, duo vascula argenti, unum thuribulum de argento, et duos calices argenti deauratos, unam naviculam argenti cum cocleari quae omnia ponderant XXVIII marchias et VII uncias de argento: Necnon indumenta serica ad eiusdem altaris culturam, scilicet, duas planetas de samito rubeo, duas planetas de samito violato. … De eius pecunia propria et alia pecunia ipsius cura et sollicitudine nostre Basilice aquisita eadem Basilica duo castra aquisivit', see Archaeological Institute of America, ed. (Sept. 1888), pp. 327-28.

[3] 'Hic [Nicholas III] beato Francisco in tantum extitit devotus ut supra altare capellae suae depingi faceret sanctum Nicholaum se ad superiora ducentem et sanctum Franciscum a tergo impellentem', Joseph Stevenson, ed., *Chronico de Lanercost* (Edinburgh: Maitland Club, 1839), p. 39, as in Julian Gardner, 'Arnolfo di Cambio and Roman Tomb Design', *BM* 115, no. 844 (Jul. 1973), p. 437, fn. 118.

[4] The translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Bari will be discussed in Chapter 3.

for the cure of his son Philip, and donated to the church the gift of a bell from Manfredonia.[5] King Charles II (1285-1309) funded repairs to the church of S. Nicola, and donated three castles to the shrine, in the towns of Rutigliano, S. Nicandro and Grumo.[6] In 1296 Charles II also built a treasury for the church, in which he deposited many precious gifts including liturgical codices and reliquaries.[7]

While popes and kings promoted the cult of St Nicholas at Rome and Bari, in Venice the saint was celebrated within the mosaic decoration of the church of S. Marco.[8] From at least the fifteenth century, St Nicholas received annual gratitude in Venice for his contribution to the protection and successes of the Republic in the state ritual of the Marriage to the Sea. During this ceremony, established before the thirteenth century and known as the *Sensa*, the doge would symbolically 'marry' the sea in celebration and appreciation of Venice's dominion of the Adriatic.[9] The ceremony took place on the feast day of the Ascension in commemoration of Doge Pietro II Orseolo (991-1009) who, having set sail from Venice on the feast of the Ascension in the year 1000, gained important victories over the Dalmatian cities of Split, Zadar and Trogir.[10] In the

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[5] The bell was donated in November 1276. See Camillo Minieri-Riccio, *Studi storici su'fascicoli angioini dell'archivio della Regia Zecca di Napoli* (Naples: Detken, 1863), p. 70, as in Caroline Astrid Bruzelius, *The Stones of Naples: Church Building in Angevin Italy, 1266-1343* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 36.

[6] Francesco Nitti di Vito, ed., *CDB. Volume XIII: Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Bari. Periodo Angioino (1266-1309)* (Bari: Vecchi, 1936), p. 16, no. 7; p. 20, no. 8; p. 21, no. 9. See also Bruzelius (2004), p. 36.

[7] For the treasury at S. Nicola, including its building history, donations and inventories, see Vito Antonio Melchiorre, *Il tesoro della basilica di S. Nicola di Bari* (Bari: Centro Studi Nicolaiani, 1993), esp. p. 6. For the gifts donated by Charles II, see Nitti di Vito, ed. (1936), pp. 100-01, no. 72. See p. 151, fn. 104, below.

[8] The appearances of St Nicholas within the mosaic decoration of the church of S. Marco, and the apse inscription declaring him a state saint, will be discussed in Chapter 4, see pp. 197-210, below.

[9] The festival of the *Sensa*, including the ritual of the doge attending mass in the church of S. Nicolò di Lido, is discussed below on pp. 224-27. The *Sensa* is mentioned by Marin Sanudo, *Le vite dei dogi*, in *RIS* 22, new series, ed. Ludovico Antonio Muratori (Città di Castello: Tipi dell'editore S. Lapi, 1900-11), vol. 22, part. 4, pp. 287-97, 416. See also Lina Urban Padoan, *Il Bucintoro: La festa e la fiera della 'Sensa' dalle origini alla caduta della repubblica* (Venice: Centro internazionale della grafica di Venezia, 1988), pp. 13-14; Girolamo Bardi, ed., *Leggenda volgare della venuta di Alessandro III a Venezia*, in *Della vittoria navale ottenuta dalla Rep. Venet. contro Othone figlioulo di Federigo I imp.* (Venice: Francesco Ziletti, 1581), p. 153, as in Pompeo Molmenti, *La storia di Venezia nella vita privata delle origini alla caduta della repubblica* (Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1905-08), vol. 1, p. 227, no. 2.

[10] During his 991-1009 reign, Pietro II Orseolo prevailed over the Dalmatian cities of Split, Zadar and Trogir, earning him the title of 'Dux Dalmatiae', conferred by the Byzantine emperor. For Venetian relations with, and conquests of, Dalmatia and the conference of the title 'Dux Dalmatiae', see Roberto

fifteenth century, the ritual of the *Sensa* also included a journey to the southern lagoon island of Lido where the doge attended a mass in the church of S. Nicolò, home to the relics of St Nicholas that were brought to Venice from Myra at the end of the eleventh century.[11]

In the later Middle Ages St Nicholas was an important state saint for the Venetian Republic and for the rulers of southern Italy. In addition several popes took his name, his cult became associated with the Franciscan Order, and two important commercial centres claimed possession of his relics. The support given to the cult of St Nicholas in medieval Italy by many levels of society, not just the elite, provokes a fundamental question which this thesis will address. St Nicholas was an orthodox bishop saint who lived in the fourth century at the time of the Great Fathers of the Eastern Church, alongside whom he was often represented in Byzantine art. However, St Nicholas did not produce theological writings, nor did he contribute to the development of church doctrine; furthermore, the manner of his death was unremarkable, as he died of an unknown illness in an era when saints were commonly martyred.[12] Despite this, within the cult of the saints in medieval Italy St Nicholas became prominent and highly visible. This thesis will explore the complex ways in which the cult attained such prominence asking, ultimately, how St Nicholas came to attract the diverse, widespread attention that he did. In order

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Cessi, *La repubblica di Venezia e il problema adriatico* (Napoli: Gennaro d'Agostino, 1953), esp. pp. 34-46, 84-131.

[11] The translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Venice will be discussed on pp. 196-97, below.

[12] The Death of St Nicholas is recounted in many of the Greek texts of the life of the saint, including the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae* (Βίος ϰαὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νιϰολάου ἀρχιμανδρίτου <γεναμένου τῆς ἁγίας Σιὼν ϰαί ἐπισϰόπου τῆς Πιναρέων πόλεως>), the *Vita Compilata* (Γέννησις, ἀνατροφή, πολιτεία ϰαὶ βίος ϑεοφιλὴς ϰαὶ τῶν ϑαυμάτων μεριϰὴ διήγησις τοῦ μεγάλου ἐν ἀρχιερεῦσι ϑεοῦ ϰαὶ ἐν ϑαυματουργίαις περιωνύμον Νιϰολάου, ἀρχιεπισόπου γενομένου Μύρων τῆς Λυϰίων ἐπαρχίας), the *Vita per Metaphrasten* (Βίος ϰαὶ πολιτεία τοῦ δσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νιϰολάου) and the *Encomium Neophyti* (Νεοφύτου πρεσβυτέρου, μοναχοῦ ϰαὶ ἐγϰλείστου ἐγϰώμιον εἰς τὸν μέγαν ϰαὶ ϑαυματουργὸν ἱεράρχην ϰαὶ πατέρα ἡμῶν Νιϰόλαον, περί τε τῆς αὐτοῦ γεννήσεως ϰαὶ τῶν πηγαίων ϑαυμάτων ϰεφαλαιώδεις διηγήσεις). See Gustav Anrich, *Hagios Nikolaos. Der heilige Nikolaos in der griechischen Kirche* (Leipzig, Berlin: Druck und Verlag von B.G. Teubner, 1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 3-65, 211-33, 235-67, 391-418. See also Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *The Life of St Nicholas in Byzantine Art* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmo, 1983), pp. 134-35. Anrich gives Latin titles for the Greek lives, which are used frequently in the St Nicholas literature. The Latin titles will be used in the text here for consistency, and the original Greek titles will also be given in the footnotes. The Greek lives will be discussed further in Chapter 1.

to address this question, this thesis will investigate the cult of St Nicholas that developed in Rome, the heart of the Latin West, and at Puglia and Venice, the two locations of the saint's relics following the eleventh-century translations. Firstly, this introduction will outline the life of St Nicholas and his cult in Byzantium, in order to provide a context for the later chapters, and for the purposes of addressing this question: if St Nicholas had such a defined, established role in the Orthodox East, what could his cult offer the rulers of medieval Italy?

THE LIFE OF ST NICHOLAS

Very little is known about the historical figure of St Nicholas. The saint as he is defined today may not have even existed: he has been identified as a composite saint, born from a confusion of Nicholas the Bishop of Myra, and another St Nicholas, the sixth-century founder of the monastery of Sion, a town just north of Myra.[13] In the early centuries of the development of St Nicholas's Greek hagiography, written legends concerned with St Nicholas of Sion were used to supplement the life of St Nicholas of Myra, creating a glorious, if fictitious, history of the saint.

The Greek legends describing the life of St Nicholas of Myra agree that the saint was born in the town of Patara in Lycia, a region of south-west, modern-day Turkey.[14] He later lived, and was buried, at Myra, the civic and ecclesiastical centre of the region of Lycia.[15] Following the Christianisation of this region, Myra possessed an episcopal church, of which St Nicholas became

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[13] As suggested by Ševčenko (1983), p. 18. For the life of St Nicholas of Sion, including the original Greek text and English translation, see Ihor Ševčenko and Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, trans., *The Life of Saint Nicholas of Sion* (Brookline, Mass.: Hellenic College Press, 1984).

[14] According to, for example, the 9th-century *Vita per Michaëlem* (Βίος ϰαὶ πολιτεία ϰαὶ μεριϰὴ ϑαυμάτων ἐξήγησις τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νιϰολάου ἀρχιεπισϰόπου Μύρων τῆς Λυϰίας) (Anrich [1913-17], vol. 1, pp. 111-39), and the 10th-century *Vita Compilata*. See also Michele Bacci, *San Nicola. Il grande taumaturgo* (Bari: Laterza and Figli, 2009), p. 22.

[15] For Myra and its surrounding regions in late Antiquity, including its geography, history, origins and development, see Werner Tietz, 'San Nicola, Myra e le sue adiacenze in età tardoantica', in *San Nicola. Splendori d'arte d'Oriente e d'Occidente*, ed. Michele Bacci (Pesaro, Milan: Skiro, 2006), pp. 35-46. For the story of the prosperity and decline of Myra, see Clive Foss, 'The Lycian Coast in the Byzantine Age', *DOP* 48 (1994), pp. 1-52, esp. pp. 23-37.

the bishop.[16] Throughout his life, St Nicholas supposedly performed many kind and miraculous acts. According to the Greek literary tradition, the saint performed his first miracle as a baby when he stood in the bath just hours after his birth.[17] As a young man, Nicholas inherited a considerable fortune from his parents. Upon hearing that a destitute father was considering prostituting his daughters because he could not afford their dowries, Nicholas approached their house one night and threw a bag of gold through an open window. This generous donation allowed the poor man to marry his eldest daughter with a handsome dowry. Nicholas repeated this act twice, and the man's two younger daughters were subsequently married honourably. However, on the third night Nicholas was observed by the father. Hoping to remain anonymous, he extracted a promise from the grateful father never to reveal his identity.[18] This story will be referred to in the text as the Three Destitute Maidens.

Perhaps the most celebrated miracle of St Nicholas, his rescue of three condemned generals, supposedly occurred before his death. At Andriake Bishop Nicholas encountered three Byzantine generals travelling to Phrygia to quell a rebellion.[19] Upon hearing that three innocent men were to be beheaded at Myra, Nicholas returned to the city and stopped the execution. Later, the three generals themselves were similarly condemned at Constantinople, and remembering the innocent men that Bishop Nicholas of Myra had rescued, they prayed to him for help. That night Nicholas appeared in a dream to Emperor Constantine and, threatening the emperor, demanded that he pardon the generals. The following day Constantine questioned the generals, and when he learned that they had prayed to the same bishop of Myra who had appeared in his dream, Constantine liberated the generals and sent them to Myra to ask the bishop to cease his threats. At

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[16] According to the 6th-century *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*, which mentions 3 buildings in the city of Myra: the cathedral dedicated to Holy Peace (St Irene), the bishop's palace and the church of H. Nikolaos. See Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 3-65; Tietz (2006), p. 36, and Foss (1994), pp. 23-24. For the Christianisation of the region, see Tietz (2009), pp. 37-42.

[17] The Birth miracle is mentioned in, amongst others, the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*, the *Vita Compilata*, and the 13th-century *Encomium Neophyti*. See also Ševčenko (1983), pp. 66-67.

[18] The legend of the Three Destitute Maidens is mentioned in, amongst others, the *Vita per Michaëlem*, the *Vita Compilata*, the *Encomium Neophyti*, and the 10th-century *Vita per Metaphrasten*. See also Ševčenko (1983), pp. 86-87.

[19] Andriake was the common name for the port of Myra.

Myra the grateful generals threw themselves at the feet of Bishop Nicholas, giving thanks to God and donating precious gifts. This miracle will be referred to in the text as the *Praxis de Stratelates* (the miracle of the generals).[20]

According to the Greek hagiography, St Nicholas continued to perform miracles after his death. The story of the saint's rescue of the child Adeodatus (or Basil) is retold in several texts. A wealthy man had borne a son through the intercession of St Nicholas and built a chapel in his honour, where his family celebrated the saint's feast day every year. One day his son Adeodatus was kidnapped and enslaved by a Seljuk sultan. On the feast of St Nicholas the following year, Adeodatus wept as he thought of the joy he had always shared with his family as they celebrated the feast in their chapel. The sultan demanded an explanation for the tears, but was not sympathetic and declared that the boy would never be released. At that moment a gust of wind appeared, demolishing the sultan's palace and snatching the boy. Still holding the sultan's cup, the boy was deposited on the threshold of his family's chapel, where his parents were celebrating the feast of St Nicholas.[21]

St Nicholas rescued other children from drowning,[22] he dispelled demons from people and objects,[23] and he saved his diocese during a famine.[24] St Nicholas is also associated with

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[20] For the miracle, see Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 67-91. This miracle is entitled *Praxis de Stratelates* by Anrich for purposes of identification, because the original Greek title does not identify the miracle: Πρᾶξις τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νικολάου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Μύρων τῆς Λυκίας. *Praxis* is a medieval Latin word meaning 'practice' or 'action'; *Stratelates*, also a medieval Latin word, comes from the Greek word 'στρατηλάτης', meaning 'soldier' or 'general', according to Ronald Edward Latham, *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List from British and Irish Sources* (London: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 363, 454. For a discussion of the historical events of the miracle, see Bacci (2009), pp. 6-18.

[21] For the legend of Adeodatus, see for example the late-10th/early-11th century *Vita Acephala* (Anrich [1913-17], vol. 1, pp. 268-75) and the *Encomium Neophyti*. See also Ševčenko (1983), p. 143. Anrich does not provide a Greek title for the *Vita Acephala*.

[22] St Nicholas rescued a boy named Demetrius from drowning, according to the *Vita Acephala* and the *Encomium Neophyti*. See Ševčenko (1983), p. 149.

[23] According to the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*, St Nicholas healed a demoniac and chopped down the Tree of Plakoma, which was inhabited by a devil. See Ševčenko (1983), pp. 91-92, 150.

[24] This is the Miracle of the Corn Ships. During a severe famine in the diocese of Myra, Bishop Nicholas heard that several ships transporting corn were anchored at the harbour. He hastened there and begged the ships' people to spare some corn, but they could not, claiming that their cargo had been weighed at Alexandria and must be delivered in full to the emperor's granaries at Constantinople. Bishop Nicholas assured them that if they shared their corn, the customs men would not find the cargo short. The men did

many sea miracles, which include the calming of storms and chasing away of troublesome demons.[25] It was perhaps because of the variety of acts and miracles performed by St Nicholas that he became the patron of diverse groups, which included students, pawnbrokers, prisoners, children and thieves. St Nicholas was also the patron saint of innumerable churches, hospitals and towns, as well as rulers, monarchs and countries, throughout the entire Christian world.

THE CULT OF ST NICHOLAS IN THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

In the centuries following his death, the cult of St Nicholas flourished in the Byzantine Empire. In the orthodox liturgy hymns were sung to St Nicholas every Thursday, the day dedicated to worshiping the apostles.[26] The Divine Liturgy mentions St Nicholas among the great hierarchs and ecumenical doctors of the Eastern Church, including Sts Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, Cyril and John Chrysostom.[27] The relics of St Nicholas attracted widespread attention and the shrine of the saint became a popular pilgrimage destination (Fig. 0.1). Studying the shrine is complicated by the fact that the town of Myra is today in ruins. The region is badly affected by earthquakes; judging by the date of the most recent coins and archaeological finds in

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so, and on arrival at Constantinople they discovered that their cargo was complete. St Nicholas distributed the corn and found that not only did it suffice to feed the whole region for two years, but also supplied enough for the sowing. See the *Vita Compilata* and *Encomium Neophyti*. Ševčenko (1983), p. 97.

[25] For example, in the *Thauma de Artemide*, a devil disguised as a nun asked some sailors heading to the tomb of St Nicholas at Myra to take there on her behalf a jar of oil for the lamps of the church. However, the nun was the devil Artemis, who St Nicholas had previously dispelled from the Tree of Plakoma, and who now wanted revenge on his church. That night, St Nicholas appeared to the sailors at sea and warned them of the nun's treachery, telling them to throw the jar overboard, which immediately went up in flames. With St Nicholas's guidance, the sailors brought their ship safely to port. Before his death, Bishop Nicholas is credited with rescuing some sailors during a storm at sea. The sailors cried out for Bishop Nicholas, who appeared in the ship and helped the sailors keep the boat afloat. When the storm calmed he vanished. The sailors landed near Myra and made their way to the cathedral to thank the bishop, who they found performing the liturgy with other priests. For these miracles, see the *Vita Compilata*, the *Vita per Metaphrasten*, and the *Encomium Neophyti*. See also Ševčenko (1983), pp. 95-96.

[26] For the orthodox liturgy of St Nicholas, see Nicola Bux, 'Il culto e la liturgia', in *San Nicola di Bari e la sua basilica*, ed. Giorgio Otranto (Milan: Electa, 1987), p. 54.

[27] In the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, the commemorations of the *Proskomide* includes the commemoration of different classes of saints, for example apostles, fathers, bishops, martyrs and miracle workers. For each category, only a few saints are mentioned. St Nicholas is included in the class of church fathers, along with Sts Gregory the Theologian, Basil, John Chrysostom and Cyril Methodius. See Meletius Michael Solovey, *The Byzantine Divine Liturgy. History and Commentary*, trans. Demetrius Emil Wysochansky (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1970), p. 126.

the area of the church of H. Nikolaos, it is believed that in the mid-thirteenth century a severe earthquake devastated the town.[28] Following subsequent centuries of flooding and other natural disasters, the ruins of the ancient church of H. Nikolaos became inaccessible. However, following modern-day excavations of the site, the most recent being the 1991-2005 programme conducted by Semiha Yıldız Ötüken,[29] the church of H. Nikolaos can now be entered and the history of the site can be unraveled.[30]

A tomb, or *martyrium*, of St Nicholas is documented at Myra from the sixth century. This monument was located just outside the city walls to the south, where it became a frequent meeting place for visitors and the inhabitants of Myra.[31] The tomb attracted pilgrims because of the famous healing properties of the oil which dripped from the saint's relics, collected in ceramic bottles as pilgrimage tokens.[32] During the reign of Emperor Justinian (482/3-565) a basilica was built over the tomb, probably following an earthquake in the year 529,[33] but was destroyed in the

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[28] Semiha Yıldız Ötüken, 'La basilica di San Nicola a Myra', in Bacci, ed. (2006), p. 47. The latest coins uncovered are identified as belonging to the rein of the Seljuk Sultan of Rum, Izeddin Keykavus II (1249-50). Little is known about the fate of Myra after the 11th century translation. Studies of the cult of St Nicholas invariably follow the story of the saint's body to Italy with the 1087 translation, neglecting the impact of the translation on the town of Myra, and the subsequent history of the church of H. Nikolaos there.

[29] For the excavations, see Ötüken (2006), pp. 47-60.

[30] Following the earthquakes and flooding, the town of Myra was all but buried. The south entrance façade of the church of H. Nikolaos became blocked by rubble and flood deposits. Access became possible after the façade was cleaned in the 1962-67 restoration conducted by Urs Peschlow. See Urs Peschlow, 'Die Kirche des hl. Nikolaos in Myra', *Antike Welt* fasc. 2 (1975), pp. 15-28 (hereafter referred to as Peschlow, 1975^1). Other buildings, including the bishop's palace, have been revealed during the recent 1991-2005 excavation: see Ötüken (2006), p. 47; Foss (1994), pp. 23-25.

[31] The tomb as a frequent meeting place for visitors is mentioned in the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*. See also Tietz (2006), p. 37; R. Martin Harrison, 'Churches and Chapels of Central Lycia', *Anatolian Studies* 13 (1963), p. 129. For the early cult of St Nicholas at Myra, see Ševčenko (1983), pp. 18-24.

[32] Many of these ceramic bottles have been recovered during excavations: see Ötüken (2006), p. 48.

[33] Ötüken (2006), p. 55. See also Urs Peschlow, 'Die Architektur der Nikolaoskirche in Myra', in *Myra, eine lykische Metropole in antiker und byzantinischer Zeit*, ed. Jürgen Borchardt (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1975), pp. 323-24 (hereafter referred to as Peschlow, 1975^2); Ševčenko (1983), p. 19. Justinian was a great benefactor of the city of Myra. During his reign the town, and the region of Lycia, experienced peace and prosperity, allowing for urban expansion and great building projects. See Foss (1994), pp. 2, 23. Corinthian columns now in the church of H. Sophia at Istanbul are believed to have come from the 6th-century Church. See Rowland J. Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia. Architecture, Structure and Liturgy of Justinian's Great Church* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988), p. 92.

eighth century either by another earthquake or by an Arab incursion.[34] In the ninth century, the newly rebuilt church was damaged again by an Arab raid supposedly launched with the intention of despoiling the tomb of St Nicholas.[35] Later invasions contributed to the ruin of the town, although by the tenth century the raids became less frequent and the region was able to regain some prosperity.[36]

The church of H. Nikolaos was rebuilt again sometime in the late-tenth or early-eleventh century. Excavations date the construction to the rule of Emperor Basil II (976-1025);[37] this rebuilding is the church that remains today, albeit in a dilapidated condition.[38] This large, domed building was constructed with a central cross-form plan and three apses to the east. The large atrium, which had four chapels and an *arcosolium*, encircled the building to form a rectangular structure at the entrance to the church, possibly designed to accommodate the increasing number of pilgrims to the tomb following its rebuilding.[39] Pilgrimage to Myra was particularly popular in the eleventh century, and the discovery of tenth- and eleventh-century silver coins from France and Italy during the most recent excavation of the church of H. Nikolaos indicates that the shrine was successful in attracting pilgrims from outside the empire and from the Latin West.[40]

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[34] The coastal settlement of Myra had been repeatedly raided by Persian armies, as well as Arab forces from nearby Crete, from as early as the 7th century. Between 602-28 the region of Lycia was ravaged by a Persian invasion. The first known Arab raid occurred in 655. Between the years 823-961 the Arabs took Crete from Byzantine domination, using the island's proximity to the empire's mainland to launch raiding parties, attacking the settlements along the western and southern coasts. See Foss (1994), pp. 2-3.

[35] As suggested by Foss (1994), pp. 30-1. In the year 809, an Arab commander named Khumayd attacked Myra hoping to raid the tomb of St Nicholas, but broke into the wrong tomb, and his fleet was destroyed by a storm. Foss's source is Theophanes the Confessor, *Chronographia*, in *CSHB*, ed. Carl de Boor (Leipzig, 1883-85; reprinted Hildesheim, 1963), vol. 43, pp. 465, 483. See also Ötüken (2006), pp. 54-55, and Harrison (1963), p. 121.

[36] Crete was re-conquered by the Byzantine Emperor Romanos II (959-63) in 961, reducing the threat to Myra of sea raids. See Foss (1994), p. 34.

[37] Coins found in the site that date to the reign of Basil II suggest the church was rebuilt at this time. Before the excavations carried out by Ötüken, the rebuilding was dated to between the 8th and 9th centuries: see Ötüken (2006), p. 59, fn. 2.

[38] The church was ransacked by Arabs in 1034. See Harrison (1963), p. 122.

[39] For the architecture of the church, see Peschlow (1975^2), pp. 301-97.

[40] Ötüken (2006), p. 55. For pilgrimage to Lycia and Myra, see Clive Foss, 'Pilgrimage in Asia Minor', *DOP* 56 (2002), pp. 129-51.

The Seljuk Turks gained temporary control of Lycia after their decisive victory at Mantzikert in 1071.[41] Accounts of the theft of the body of St Nicholas, first by Norman merchants in 1087 and then by Venetian soldiers in 1099, describe how Myra had been abandoned by its Greek population. The inhabitants had sought refuge from the Turks on a nearby acropolis, leaving the tomb of St Nicholas protected by just four monks.[42] In the years following the theft, when the region had returned to Byzantine rule, the town of Myra began to prosper again and the church of H. Nikolaos was repaired. Pilgrims returned to the shrine, including the Anglo-Saxon merchant pilgrim Saewulf, who stopped at Myra in 1102 en route to the Holy Land.[43] In the late-twelfth century, the region of Lycia entered permanent Turkish control.[44] Pilgrimage to the tomb at Myra probably ceased completely only when the mid-thirteenth-century earthquake, mentioned above, rendered the tomb and the town inaccessible.

The early diffusion of the cult of St Nicholas in the East has been attributed, in part, to the popularity of the miracle of St Nicholas's rescue of the three condemned generals (Fig. 0.2). A saint who could influence an emperor was surely a powerful intercessor, and because of this link to Emperor Constantine, the cult of St Nicholas appealed to the emperors of Byzantium and received benefaction from them. In the imperial capital of Constantinople, Emperor Justinian built the earliest-known church dedicated to St Nicholas outside Lycia.[45] According to the tenth-

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[41] For the Battle of Mantzikert and the subsequent decline of the Byzantine Empire, see Michael Angold, *The Byzantine Empire 1024-1204: a Political History* (London, New York: Longman, 1984), pp. 21-26. See also Foss (1994), p. 3. Byzantine rule was restored at the end of the 11th century, allowing Lycia a further century of peace.

[42] As described in the translation accounts of Niceforo and Monachi Anonymi Littorensis. These accounts are discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, pp. 126-28, 196-97.

[43] Saewulf visited the Holy Land between 1102-03, passing through Patara, at this time an important imperial naval base, and Myra, where he landed in 1102 to worship at the tomb of St Nicholas. See Saewulf, *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land*, in *Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society* 4, trans. Lord Bishop of Clifton (London: Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, 1896; reprinted New York: Ams Press, 1971), p. 4, as in Foss (1994) p. 15.

[44] Myra entered permanent Turkish control after their victory in 1176 at the Battle of Myriokephalon. See Foss (1994), p. 36.

[45] Justinian's church, dedicated to Sts Priscus and Nicholas, was located outside the walls of the Blachernae monastery, on the shores of the Golden Horn. See Procopius, *The Buildings*, trans. Hugh B. Dewing (London: Loeb Classics, 1954), book 1, part 3, p. 61. See also Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, p. 454; vol. 2, p. 469; Ševčenko (1983), p. 19, fn. 8; Tietz (2006), p. 37.

century Book of Ceremonies, behind the apse of the church of H. Sophia a passageway, apparently dedicated to St Nicholas, led the emperor from the church to the imperial palace following church ceremonies.[46] Possibly during the reign of Basil I (867-86), the south tympanum of H. Sophia was decorated with mosaics depicting bishops and prophets, St Nicholas among them (Fig. 0.3).[47] Basil I also dedicated his grand Nea church to the Theotokos, the Archangel Michael, Prophet Elias, and St Nicholas,[48] and it was even suggested by a twelfth-century legend that Basil made an attempt to translate the relics of St Nicholas to Constantinople.[49] In 1118 the Empress Irene, wife of Emperor Alexius I Comnenos (1081-1118), constructed a church dedicated to St Nicholas.[50] By the year 1200 two more St Nicholas churches were documented in Constantinople, located near the middle of the north-east wall of the Golden Horn and on the slope of the acropolis.[51]

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[46] According to the Book of Ceremonies, the passageway, dedicated to St Nicholas, ran southwards from the south porch of the church to the imperial palace: ‘Καὶ διελθόντες ἀμφότεροι διὰ τοῦ ὄπισθεν τοῦ βήματος στενοῦ διαβατικοῦ τοῦ Ἀγίου Νικολάου, ἀπέρχονται μέχρι τοῦ Ἀγίου Φρέατος’, translated into French by Albert Vogt as: ‘Tous deux ayant passé par l‘étroit passage de Saint-Nicolas, qui se trouve derrière le sanctuaire, s’en vont jusqu’au Puits Sacré’. The date of the construction of the passageway is not known. See Constantin VII Porphyrogénète, *Le Livre des Cérémonies*, trans. Albert Vogt (Paris: ‘Les Belles letters’, 1935-40), vol. 1, p. 171; see also pp. 28, 172, and the commentary on p. 78. The quote above is taken from fol. 86r of the Book of Ceremonies. See also Mainstone (1988), p. 113.

[47] The mosaic of St Nicholas is now destroyed, but was seen and recorded by the Fossati brothers during their 1847-49 restoration of the church of H. Sophia. Cyril Mango dates this mosaic program to the final years of Basil I’s rule or the first half of the reign of his successor, Leo VI (886-912). See Cyril Mango, *Materials for the Study of the Mosaics of St Sophia at Istanbul* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1962), pp. 49-51. For St Nicholas’s appearance in the mosaics of H. Sophia and other Byzantine churches, see Ševčenko (1983), esp. pp. 21-22, fn. 25.

[48] See Anrich (1913-17), vol. 2, p. 465. Anrich’s source for the Nea church is the *Vita Basilii* from the 11th-century writer Theophanes Continuatus. See *Theophanes Continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius Manachus*, in *CSHB*, ed. Immanuelis Bekkeri (Bonn: E. Weberi, 1838), pp. 211-353.

[49] See the 12th-century account of the translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Venice, which will be discussed in Chapter 4: Monachi Anonymi Littorensis, ‘Historia de traslatione Sanctorum magni Nicholai, terra marique gloriosi, eiusdem avunculi alterius Nicolai, Theodorique martyris pretiosi de civitate Myrae in monasterium San Nicolai de Littore Venetiarum’, *RHC* 5 (Paris: [unknown], 1895), p. 261: ‘Quomodo a nobis rei veritatem exsculpere poteritis, quae ab omnibus ignoratur a tempore Vasilii imperatoris. arcam enim, unde Vasilius imperator eum abstulit, cum Constantinopolim asportare quondam voluit, videre potestis; sed ubi vel quomodo reposuerit, cum ipsum transferre nequiverit, nullus indicare mortalium potest vobis.’ See Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, p. 453.

[50] Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *PG* (Paris: Migne, 1857-66), vol. 127, p. 1120; Anrich (1913-17), vol. 2, p. 470.

[51] For the Acropolis church, see the *Encomium Neophyti*. The church at the Golden Horn is attested by Stephen of Novgorod: see George P. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth centuries* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1984), p. 332. Novgorod may, however, have

The Byzantine imperial families also became involved with the tomb of St Nicholas at Myra. In the eleventh century John the Orphanotrophos, brother of Emperor Michael IV (1034-41), made a pilgrimage to Myra after St Nicholas appeared to him in a dream, and made offerings towards the repair of the church of H. Nikolaos.[52] Empress Zoe, wife of Michael IV, was an important benefactor of the cult of St Nicholas. During Zoe's marriage to her third husband, Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-55), the imperial couple patronised a restoration of the shrine of the saint at Myra (Fig. 0.4).[53] The cult of St Nicholas in Byzantium was also supported by elite families. In the tenth century, the treasurer Leo Patrikios commissioned the Bible commonly referred to as the Bible of Leo Sakellarios (in reference to Leo's title). The Bible was donated to a monastery of St Nicholas that Leo had founded, and an image of St Nicholas appears on folio 3r. At the saint's feet are represented the kneeling figures of Constantine, the late brother of Leo, and Makar, Abbot of Leo's monastery of St Nicholas (Fig. 0.5).[54]

Imperial support of the cult of St Nicholas was public and enduring. The patronage of the Byzantine emperors helped establish the shrine at Myra as a successful pilgrimage destination, and aided the dissemination of the cult to Constantinople. From here the cult spread to Italy as early as the seventh century,[55] and then radiated throughout medieval Europe as far as England and Russia.[56] At the end of the eleventh century, the international cult of St Nicholas experienced

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been referring to Justinian's church dedicated to Sts Priscus and Nicholas near the Blachernae monastery. The fact that he does not mention the church's dedication to St Priscus may be an indication that the dual dedication was no longer used, and that St Nicholas had become the dominant dedication. See also Anrich (1913-17), vol. 2, p. 470.

[52] Ötüken (2006), p. 55. Ötüken's source is the 12th-century Madrid Skylitzes. See Ioannis Thurn, ed., *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973), pp. 52-57, 397; Foss (1994), p. 34.

[53] According to an inscription discovered during excavations of a cemetery at Myra. See Ötüken (2006), pp. 55-57. See also p. 136, below.

[54] For the Bible of Leo Sakellarios, see Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, eds, *The Glory of Byzantium. Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843-1261* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), pp. 88-90, and John Lowden, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (London: Phaidon, 1997), p. 201. The manuscript is now located at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (hereafter cited as BAV), MS Vat. Reg. gr. 1.

[55] See pp. 33-38, below, which discusses St Nicholas's early appearances at Rome.

[56] For the spread of the cult of St Nicholas, see Charles W. Jones, *Saint Nicholas of Myra, Bari and Manhattan. Biography of a Legend* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1978). The cult of St Nicholas flourished especially in Russia; this aspect of the cult will not however be dealt with in this

its most significant event: in 1087 the body of the saint was stolen from the shrine at Myra and taken to the town of Bari in the southern-Italian region of Puglia. This act brought the cult of St Nicholas to the full attention of the Latin West, and the shrine at Bari quickly became an international pilgrimage destination. The ripple-effects of the Barese translation were felt far and wide, but most powerfully in Venice. In the year 1099 the Venetian Republic claimed that it too had stolen the body of St Nicholas from Myra, and the saint's body was deposited in the church of S. Nicolò di Lido at the sea entrance to the Venetian Lagoon.[57]

The presence of the relics of St Nicholas captured the imagination of the communities into which they were brought. The popularity of the saint in the Byzantine East can be considered a precursor to the explosion of the cult in the West following the translations; yet the cult of St Nicholas had existed in Italy for centuries beforehand. This thesis will shed light on the impact of the translations upon the saint's cult in Italy and the regions into which the relics were brought, as well as the complex ways in which the cult of St Nicholas became assimilated into Latin culture. Through case studies it will examine the developments that the cult underwent as it moved from East to West, and investigate the many repercussions of the promotion of the cult in medieval Italy, which ranged from reaction to appropriation, and ultimately to the establishment of a new St Nicholas.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

The cult of St Nicholas is not a new subject for study. Recently this extensive and diverse cult was the focus of a 2006 exhibition held at the Castello Svevo in Bari: 'San Nicola: Splendori d'arte d'Oriente e d'Occidente'.[58] The curator of this exhibition and editor of its accompanying catalogue, Michele Bacci, has published widely on St Nicholas, most recently in a 2009 book

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thesis. See Aleksei M. Lidov, '"Il dio russo". Culto e iconografia di san Nicola nell'antica Russia', in Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 77-88.

[57] Again, the translations will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. For an overview of the translations, see Bacci (2009), pp. 103-10.

[58] The exhibition was held at Castello Svevo, Bari, 7 December 2006-6 May 2007.

entitled *San Nicola. Il grande taumaturgo*.[59] The 2006 exhibition and catalogue provided an excellent introduction to the cult of St Nicholas at the beginning of the research process for this thesis. They cover many aspects of the cult including iconography, liturgy and hagiography, from its early eastern origins to subsequent development in Russia, the Latin West and, in later centuries, northern Europe and America. However, the material presented and the essays published in the catalogue highlight significant gaps in recent research, which this thesis will address. In particular, the cult of St Nicholas in Venice was not discussed, and only referenced briefly in connection with the translations of the saint's relics to Italy. Additionally, the later development of the saint's iconography in Italy following the translations was not explored analytically. Important connections between the cult and the mendicant orders were not made and local reactions to the establishment of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari were neglected. These aspects were also recently overlooked in *San Nicola. Il grande taumaturgo*, which offers an indication of the direction in which scholarship concerning the cult of St Nicholas is leaning. This book discusses first the historical figure of St Nicholas and the events of his life as described in the Greek hagiography, before touching upon the eleventh-century translations and exploring the later development of the cult throughout the Mediterranean, Russia and Europe. The book delivers a general impression of the cult of St Nicholas covering a wide geographical area, rather than focussing upon any one particular location.

Our understanding of the cult of St Nicholas has also been significantly advanced by the works of Karl Meisen and Charles W. Jones.[60] These authors' surveys explore the origins, dissemination and development of the cult. However, because of the enormity of the cult and the sheer volume of material associated with it, these surveys are geographically wide-ranging and, as a result, they are occasionally superficial, particularly when discussing iconography and artistic

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[59] See Bacci (2009). For the exhibition catalogue, see Michele Bacci, ed., *San Nicola. Splendori d'arte d'Oriente e d'Occidente* (Pesaro, Milan: Skiro, 2006).

[60] Karl Meisen, *Nikolauskult und Nikolausbrauch im Abendlande: eine kultgeographisch-volkskundliche Untersuchung* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1931); Jones (1978).

produce. The following chapters aim to redress the balance of St Nicholas research by introducing little-explored avenues of investigation, with the hope of contributing to a more thorough and complete understanding of the cult of St Nicholas in medieval Italy. They will also take a new slant on common assumptions regarding the saint's cult in Italy, for example that the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari was one of the most popular pilgrimage destinations in the Latin West. I hope to show that in the case of St Nicholas, such statements cannot be made without considering the complex historical, social and religious contexts of the shrine and those who visited it.

The cult of the saints in general has been a popular choice for scholarly study in recent decades. In 1981 André Vauchez published his study of sainthood in the later Middle Ages, drawing attention to the roles that saints could play for medieval society.[61] In a more focussed study, Silvio Tramontin, et al, achieved the same for the cult of the saints in Venice.[62] The popularity of older saints in the later Middle Ages has been recently examined by Jessica Richardson and Katherine Ludwig Jansen, whose work on St Leonard of Noblat and Mary Magdalen aims to reconcile their later flourishing cults with their identities as saints from the early centuries of Christianity.[63] This thesis aims to do the same for St Nicholas, and to determine whether Vauchez's influential theories can be helpful in understanding the development of the cult of St Nicholas in Italy. For the iconography of the saints, the four-volume survey by George Kaftal has proved an indispensable point of departure for this study;[64] its limits, however, were immediately apparent, and Chapter Two hopes to advance our understanding of the iconography of St Nicholas in Italian art. For the life of St Nicholas, this thesis draws heavily upon the

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[61] André Vauchez, *La sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du moyen âge* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1981). This work has been translated into English: André Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, trans. Jean Birrell (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). This translation will be used in this thesis.

[62] Silvio Tramontin, et al, eds, *Culto dei santi a Venezia* (Venice: Studium Cattolico Veneziano, 1965).

[63] See Jessica Richardson, 'Shaping and Maintaining Devotion: The Cult and Images of St Leonard of Noblat in Italy, c.1100-1450', Ph.D. thesis (Courtauld Institute of Art, 2007); Katherine Ludwig Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalen: Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[64] George Kaftal, *Iconography of the Saints* vols 1-4 (Florence: Sansoni, 1952-85).

canonical text of Jacopo da Voragine, the *Legenda Aurea*, but also upon the earlier Greek and Latin hagiography.[65]

The cult of St Nicholas in the Byzantine East has been thoroughly explored, particularly by the 2006 Castello Svevo exhibition. The Greek texts of the life of St Nicholas are easily accessible in the work of Gustav Anrich, and our understanding of the iconography of St Nicholas in the East has been progressed by the work of Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, whose book *The Life of St Nicholas in Byzantine Art* is referenced throughout this thesis.[66] The transition of the cult of St Nicholas from the orthodox world to the Latin West has been discussed by Pina Belli d'Elia, et al, in *La Puglia fra Bisanzio e l'Occidente*, although this work does not elaborate upon the later 'Italian' cult of St Nicholas that emerged.[67]

Literature concerning the cult of St Nicholas in Italy generally focuses upon the translation of the saint's relics to Bari and the subsequent cult that developed there. The *Codice Diplomatico Barese* series provides unrestricted access to the complete collection of documents preserved in the archive of the church of S. Nicola at Bari, and will be repeatedly referenced throughout this thesis. Gerardo Cioffari, director of the *Centro Studi Nicolaiani* at Bari, has published extensively on the church of S. Nicola, the role of Bari as an ecclesiastical centre, and the life of St Nicholas in general.[68] Cioffari's work is, however, geographically focused upon the cult centre at Bari, and does not address the shrine of the saint at Venice; nor does it consider the wider implications of the establishment of the shrine at Bari within local sanctity and pilgrimage. Information regarding the early cult of St Nicholas in Puglia, as well as the monuments and works of art relating to the cult throughout Puglia in the centuries following the translation, can

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[65] Jacobus de Voragine, *Jocobi a Voragine: Legenda aurea vulgo historia lombardica dicta*, ed. Johann G.T. Graesse (Bratislava: Apud G. Koebner, 1890, 3rd edition).

[66] Ševčenko (1983); Anrich (1913-17). See p. 3, fn. 12, above. Anrich provides the Greek *vitae* in their original Greek. He does not provide translations of the Greek texts, only later Latin versions of a Greek life where applicable.

[67] Pina Belli d'Elia, et al, *La Puglia fra Bisanzio e l'Occidente* (Milan: Electa, 1980).

[68] See, for example: Gerardo Cioffari, *Storia della basilica di S. Nicola di Bari. L'epoca normanno svevo* (Bari: Centro Studi Nicolaiani, 1984); Gerardo Cioffari, *Storia della chiesa di Bari dalle origini alla fine del dominio bizantino (1071)* (Bari: Centro Studi Nicolaiani, 1992); Gerardo Cioffari, et al, *Agiografia in Puglia: i santi tra critica storica e devozione popolare* (Bari: Paolo Malagrinò, 1991).

generally be found in surveys of the region, for example in the works of Pina Belli d'Elia and Marina Falla Castelfranchi.[69] These surveys have been useful for exploring the iconographical development of the cult of St Nicholas, but do not provide hagiographical or historical contexts for the images and monuments discussed.

The cult of St Nicholas at Rome was addressed by the Castello Svevo exhibition catalogue,[70] and will be discussed in this thesis for the purpose of providing a context for the later chapters. In contrast, considering that it was an important cult centre for St Nicholas in Italy, Venice is generally overlooked by the St Nicholas literature. Recently, the monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido has been the subject of a thorough survey by Licia Fabbiani, yet the church itself is given little context in terms of the wider cult of St Nicholas in Venice and Italy.[71] General surveys of the churches of Venice provide glimpses into the shape of the cult there,[72] and literature concerning the city's ceremonial traditions suggests the importance of St Nicholas as a state saint.[73] However, an overview of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice, covering the monuments, representations in art, hagiography and ritual, is currently lacking. Evidence for the cult in Venice is provided by contemporary and antiquarian Venetian sources, for example Marin Sanudo, Francesco Sansovino and Flaminio Corner.[74] The *Archivio Sartori* is also a useful resource for the

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[69] See, for example, Pina Belli d'Elia, ed., *Alle sorgenti del romanico Puglia XI secolo: Bari, Pinacoteca provinciale, giugno-dicembre 1975* (Bari: Amministrazione provinciale, 1975); Marina Falla Castelfranchi, *Pittura monumentale bizantina in Puglia* (Milan: Electa, 1991).

[70] See Giorgia Pollio, 'Il culto e l'iconografia di san Nicola a Roma', in Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 137-44.

[71] Licia Fabbiani, *La fondazione monastica di San Nicolò di Lido (1053-1628)* (Venice: Comune di Venezia, Assessorato Affari Istituzionali: Dipartimento di Storia e Critica delle Arti, Universita degli Studi di Venezia, 1989).

[72] See, for example, Ennio Concina, *Le chiese di Venezia. L'arte e la storia* (Udine: Magnus, 1995).

[73] See Iain Fenlon, *The Ceremonial City: History, Memory and Myth in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2007).

[74] See Marin Sanudo, *I diarii di Marino Sanuto* vols 1-58 (Bologna: Forni Editore, 1969-70, first published Venice: F. Visentini, 1879-1903); Sanudo (1900-11); Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare* vols 1-8, ed. Giustiniano Martinioni (Venice: Filippi, 1968, reprint, first published 1663); Flaminio Corner, *Ecclesiae Venetae. Antiquis monumentis, nunc etiam primum editis, illustratae ac in decades distributae* vols 1-13 (Venice: Giovanni Battista Pasquali, 1749).

convent of S. Nicoletto dei Frari.[75] These sources have not, however, been considered collectively, and remain under-exploited for the cult of St Nicholas in Venice.

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This thesis will begin by presenting an overview of the cult of St Nicholas in Italy, examining the hagiography, liturgy and iconography associated with the cult. It will investigate general trends across Italy before focusing attention on the two cult centres of Bari (and the wider region of Puglia) and Venice. A main issue that this thesis will explore is the impact that the translations of the saint's relics had upon the existing cult, and it is necessary therefore to attain a wider impression of the cult in order to assess specific developments that occurred in each region.

Each chapter of this thesis will address an aspect of the cult of St Nicholas in Italy that has been neglected in the literature. Chapter One will discuss the hagiography of St Nicholas, with the intention of identifying how the Latin legends differ from the Greek, and suggesting possible reasons for this. The chapter will also explore the cult of St Nicholas in Rome, because this was the centre of the Christian world in the West, and because the earliest surviving evidence for the cult of St Nicholas in Italy is from Rome. The chapter will consider the significance of papal support for the cult of St Nicholas in Italy, and will seek to identify which aspects of the cult of St Nicholas were promoted in Rome with the aim of gaining insight into the roles that the saint could play for the papacy.

The first chapter will also assess an alternative important influence upon the development of the cult of St Nicholas in Italy. The increasing popularity of the cult throughout the centuries of the Middle Ages suggests that it was able to respond to the needs of a continually changing social and religious environment. In the thirteenth century the advent of the mendicant orders, in

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[75] Antonio P. Sartori, *Archivio Sartori. Documenti di storia e arte francescana* vols 1-3 (Padua: Biblioteca Antoniana, Basilica del Santo, 1983-88).

particular the Franciscans, had a profound impact upon medieval sanctity; yet the implications of mendicant spirituality for the cults of older, long-venerated saints is little understood. For St Nicholas, Chapter One will investigate the impact of the establishment of the Franciscan Order upon his cult, and will ask how, and to what extent, did the existence of the order influence the development of the cult in the later Middle Ages? Additionally, what changes did the cult of St Nicholas undergo that enabled it to remain relevant within a new spiritual context so removed from its origins?

Chapter Two will address similar questions and issues as Chapter One, but will seek answers within the saint's iconography, a medium that was accessible to the largest audience. This chapter will not discuss in detail the entire corpus of St Nicholas images in Italian art, but will bring to light general patterns and developments. How did the image of St Nicholas adapt to respond to and reflect its new, Italian audience? Significant iconographical changes occurred within the iconography of St Nicholas around the thirteenth century; Chapter Two will investigate for the first time the reasons for this, and the implications of the changes for the cult as a whole. This chapter will also explore the relationship between the saint's hagiography and iconography, in order to emphasise their complex relationship and to determine to what extent one was influenced by the other.

A saint's cult is complex and evolving by nature, and many factors can shape its development and how it is perceived. For the cult of St Nicholas, the most significant event in the history of the cult was the translation of the saint's relics, first to Bari and then to Venice. After presenting a general overview of the cult of St Nicholas in Italy in the first two chapters, this thesis will shift to a more focused approach, concentrating upon the geographical regions to which the saint's relics were brought at the end of the eleventh century. St Nicholas presents a unique example within the cult of the saints in Italy: his body was translated twice to two major maritime centres within the space of only a few years. Yet, the cults that subsequently developed in these regions were distinct. The case studies presented in Chapters Three and Four will investigate the impact that the presence of the relics of the saint had upon both the local St Nicholas cult, and the wider social and religious contexts of the newly-established shrines. Did the general trends identified in earlier chapters still apply when the relics of St Nicholas were introduced into regions that already had an established cult following for the saint? Alternatively, to what extent were the relics responsible for shaping the cult of St Nicholas in these locations, and were they in fact just one of a number of factors that came together to create a unique profile of the saint and his cult?

Chapter Three will discuss the cult of St Nicholas in Puglia in general, not just at Bari, because Bari was the principal city of the region and the ripple effects of the translation can be discerned throughout its hinterland. The chapter will identify the repercussions of the translation, and investigate the local reactions to it. For the first time, this thesis will present a profile of the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim at Trani, including all surviving images of the saint, and will investigate to what extent the newly established shrine of St Nicholas at Bari was an influential factor in the creation of the cult of this new saint. Chapter Three will also redress a common assumption regarding the cult of St Nicholas in Italy, that the shrine at Bari was one of the most popular pilgrimage destinations in the whole of the Latin West in the later Middle Ages. Was this actually the case, and if so, should the success of the shrine be attributed to the popularity of the saint or were other factors, in particular location and current events, also significant?

Chapter Four will present an overview of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice. The cult in this location encompasses diverse media, social classes and devotional needs, but the potential for gaining a greater understanding of the place of this saint in Venetian society has been overlooked. This chapter will investigate the roles that the saint played for the Venetian Republic, and how the cult contributed to a sense of Venetian civic identity and pride. It will also examine the Venetian attitude towards the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari. Did the belief that the Venetians owned the true relics of St Nicholas mean that they considered the shrine at Bari to be illegitimate and based upon a false belief? In order to address this question, Chapter Four will bring together material that has not been exploited for the purposes of gaining insight into the cult of St Nicholas in Venice as a whole, in particular the contemporary and antiquarian Venetian sources. Notarial testaments from the Venetian state archives will also be used because they can be revealing about patterns of devotion. In addition, Chapters Three and Four will both make use of the Visitation documents from the Archivio Segreto at the Vatican, as they constitute the earliest and most complete surveys of church and altar dedications in Italy, and are very useful for assessing the spread of a cult.

The time frame for this thesis is necessarily wide, and somewhat flexible. In order to create a general impression of the cult of St Nicholas in Italy, and to establish significant trends and developments, it is necessary to examine the cult from the period of its earliest-surviving evidence. This period is the seventh century, when St Nicholas first appeared in the Roman liturgy, although a more substantial body of evidence survives from the tenth and eleventh centuries in southern Italy, in the rock-cut churches of Puglia and eastern Basilicata. Because the majority of surviving artworks pertaining to the cult of St Nicholas in Venice date from the late-fifteenth century, and because at this time the iconography of St Nicholas displayed a completely transformed image of the saint that is pertinent to the discussions of this thesis, the time frame will incorporate this period. The close of the Middle Ages around the year 1500, at the start of the Reformation and the Franco-Italian wars, will be the cut-off date for the material discussed, although when relevant later works will be referred to.[76]

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[76] I follow Jansen's logic here. See Jansen (2000), p. 5.

CHAPTER ONE: ST NICHOLAS AND THE LATIN CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

By the later Middle Ages, the cult of St Nicholas had become one of the most widespread in all Christendom. In Italy the cult was supported by popes, kings and emperors, and in 1087, merchants from the Puglian town of Bari had acquired the saint's relics from the Eastern Empire. This famous translation, applauded at the close of the eleventh century and celebrated to this day by an annual festival, was not the means by which the cult was introduced to the Latin West. Rather, it was an important event in the gradual assimilation of the saint's cult by Latin culture. A central aim of this thesis is to illustrate that, over the centuries following the saint's death, the cult of St Nicholas in Italy underwent a gradual process of Latinisation. The cult became slowly integrated into western life in many ways: into the Latin liturgy and western spirituality, into the visual arts, and into the everyday lives of those who prayed to the saint. By the time of the 1087 translation, the cult of St Nicholas was already firmly established within the Latin Church and within western visual culture.

The process of Latinisation is introduced in this chapter in a discussion of three fundamental aspects of the cult of St Nicholas in Italy: his hagiography, his role within the Roman Church including its liturgy, and the saint's place within western spirituality. Part One will examine the development of the literary traditions of the saint. A saint's hagiography was an essential element in establishing the role to be played by the saint. In the case of St Nicholas, as his life gradually seeped into Latin hagiographical traditions, the saint too became increasingly Latinised as his legend was altered and updated by its new, western audience. Furthermore, painted scenes from the lives of saints often originated from their *vitae*; in the cult of St Nicholas, a particularly close relationship existed between the saint's written lives and iconography. Before discussing the iconography of St Nicholas, which will be addressed in Chapter Two, it is therefore important to understand the sources for the scenes depicted. In discussing the assimilation of a saint's cult into the Latin West, it is also important to consider how the cult was received and promoted at the heart of the Latin Church: Part Two will therefore examine the cult at Rome, and will discuss the place of St Nicholas within the Roman liturgy and the role played by the papacy in promoting his cult.

In the thirteenth century, western spirituality experienced a dramatic upheaval in terms of the virtues that were extolled and the roles that were desired for the saints. Part Three shows how the cult of St Nicholas further developed in the new mendicant era, and that through association with the Franciscan Order the cult became rejuvenated and assimilated into much greater religious concerns. The relationship between the cult of St Nicholas and the Franciscans is a little-explored aspect of the saint's cult in Italy; I believe it was integral to the growing popularity of the cult in the later Middle Ages.

PART ONE: LATIN HAGIOGRAPHY

THE TEXTS

In medieval Italy, the life and miracles of St Nicholas were known through a large number of both Greek and Latin textual sources. These reveal contradictory information regarding events from the life of St Nicholas, perhaps an inevitable result of the emergence of multiple hagiographical traditions for one single figure. In the Latin West the earliest hagiographical works date from the seventh century. Thus, from a very early stage in the growth of St Nicholas's cult, his literary life developed within distinctive cultural and religious contexts. In the late-thirteenth century, therefore, the canonical life of St Nicholas described in Jacopo da Voragine's *Legenda Aurea* represented centuries of assimilation and development of the life within the literary traditions of the Latin West, describing to the reader an eastern saint who had gradually become 'Latinised'.

As an orthodox saint, the first hagiographical writings regarding the life of St Nicholas originated in the East, and Greek texts survive from as early as the sixth century.[1] These textual sources were assembled and published between 1913 and 1917 by Gustav Anrich, and additional texts can be sought in François Halkin's *Biblioteca Hagiographica Graeca*.[2] The Greek hagiographical tradition is complicated because St Nicholas is a composite saint. As discussed in the Introduction, the early literary sources for more than one historical Nicholas became combined to create the saint that was known in the Middle Ages. In this respect, St Nicholas can be included within a small group of early saints who fall into this category, the most notable being Mary Magdalen.[3] The earliest surviving Greek sources associated with St Nicholas are a text from the sixth century containing the miracle of the *Praxis de Stratelates*, and the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*, written in the second half of the sixth century.[4] This text describes St Nicholas of Sion, the co-founder of the monastery of Sion just north of Myra, who died in 564. It is suggested that at some point before the tenth century, the lives of this Nicholas and those of Nicholas of Myra were merged in a text entitled the *Vita Compilata*, creating the single figure commonly known as St Nicholas of Myra. This text attributes the miracles performed by Nicholas of Sion to Nicholas of Myra.[5]

The later Greek texts are not consistent with their details of St Nicholas's life, and each one contains a unique combination of episodes from his life and miracles. For example, the *Vita*

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[1] Nancy Patterson Ševčenko provides a helpful summary of 25 of the Greek texts. See Ševčenko (1983), pp. 25-27. See also Gerardo Cioffari, 'San Nicola nelle fonti letterarie dal V all'VIII secolo', in Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 31-34.

[2] Anrich (1913-17); François Halkin, *BHG* (Brussels: Bollandists Society, 1957), pp. 139-51. Anrich provides the texts in their original Greek and includes, where relevant, later Latin translations. See p. 3, fn. 12, above. Ševčenko notes that Anrich and the *BHG* exclude poetical and liturgical works. See Ševčenko (1983), p. 25, for further bibliographical information.

[3] See Jansen (2000), pp. 32-35. Jansen discusses how the medieval legend of Mary Magdalen was based upon a literary tradition in which all the Marys of the bible became merged.

[4] The text of the *Praxis de Stratelates* is thought to have been produced during the reign of Emperor Justinian (527-65), probably as part of a life of the saint written around the 4th or 5th century. See Jacques de Voragine, *La Légende Dorée*, ed. Alain Boureau, et al (Paris: Gallimard, 2004), p. 1074. For the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*, see Ševčenko and Ševčenko, trans. (1984).

[5] Ševčenko (1983), pp. 18-19. See also Michele Bacci, 'Il corpo e l'immagine di San Nicola', in Bacci, ed. (2006), p. 18.

per Michaëlem, the earliest surviving comprehensive life of St Nicholas of Myra written in the early-ninth century by Michael the *Archimandrite*,[6] contains the following significant episodes: the Birth and Bath Miracle; the Three Destitute Maidens; St Nicholas is Consecrated as Bishop; St Nicholas Destroys Pagan Temples; the *Praxis de Stratelates*;[7] St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm; the Miracle of the Corn Ships; the Death of St Nicholas and the Miracle of the Tomb; the Tree of Plakoma; the Nun and the Oil; St Nicholas Destroys Idols, and St Nicholas Distributes Alms.[8] Two comprehensive and influential texts from the tenth century (the *Vita Compilata*, written c. 900, and the late-tenth-century *Vita per Metaphrasten*) contain the same stories as the *Vita per Michaëlem*, but with the additional episodes of St Nicholas's Schooling (both), St Nicholas Heals a Demoniac (*Vita Compilata*) and St Nicholas Heals a Blind Man (*Vita per Metaphrasten*).[9] However, the *Encomium Neophyti*, written c.1200, contains new stories which become prominent in later St Nicholas texts, in particular the story of St Nicholas rescuing the children Basil (later Adeodatus) from Saracen captors, and Demetrius from drowning at sea.[10] These three later texts also place a greater emphasis on St Nicholas's church career: in the *Vita per Metaphrasten* Nicholas is consecrated as a deacon, and in the *Vita Compilata* as a priest; the *Encomium Neophyti* goes a step further and ordains Nicholas as an archbishop. These examples demonstrate that the Greek lives of St Nicholas were continually developing, and that the events

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[6] Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 113-39; Halkin (1957), no. 1348. An *archimandrite* was an abbot of the Orthodox Church.

[7] This legend contains several individual episodes. The *Vita per Michaëlem* includes 6: St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution; the Three Generals in Prison; St Nicholas Appears to Emperor Constantine; St Nicholas Appears to Ablabius; the Three Generals Come Before Constantine, and the Three Generals Thank St Nicholas.

[8] The events of these episodes will be discussed, when relevant, in later chapters.

[9] *Vita per Metaphrasten*: Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 235-67; Halkin (1957), no. 1349. The *Vita per Metaphrasten* is considered to be a revision and expansion of the *Vita per Michaëlem*, and provides the foundation for future biographies of the saint. See Edward G. Clare, *St Nicholas: His Legends and Iconography* (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1985), pp. 12-17. *Vita Compilata*: Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 211-33; Halkin (1957), no. 1348c.

[10] Of the extant Greek lives, these miracles first appear in the *Thauma Tria* (Θαύματα τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νικολάου ἐπισκόπου Μύρων τῆς Λυκίας), dated c.850-900, but do not appear in a comprehensive life until the *Encomium Neophyti*. For the *Thauma Tria*, see Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 185-97; Halkin (1957), nos 1353-56. For the *Encomium Neophyti*, see Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 392-417; Halkin (1957), no. 1364.

of his life and the miracles attributed to him were altered as the saint became more clearly defined as a single figure.

The western hagiographical tradition of St Nicholas followed a different path of development from the Greek lives. At a very early stage, the Greek literary tradition of the saint was known to western hagiographers, and the earliest surviving Latin life is believed to be a translation of the Greek *Praxis de Stratelates*, dating to the seventh century.[11] Two centuries later, around the year 880, John the Deacon of Naples composed a Latin life of St Nicholas, believed to have been inspired by the contemporary Greek work of the Constantinopolitan Patriarch Methodius.[12] John the Deacon's work in turn inspired subsequent Latin lives throughout medieval Europe. Some works only describe one miracle,[13] whereas others were more extensive, for example the works of Joel of Le Mans, written in Angers,[14] and those of a monk of Brauweiler.[15] In the eleventh century, the Benedictine monk Otloh of St Emmeram's in Regensburg composed either one or two lives of St Nicholas inspired by, and at times copied from, the life by John the Deacon,[16] as well as an older Greek life transcribed into Latin by Falconius.[17]

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[11] Halkin (1957), no. 1350. See also Jones (1978), pp. 29-43; Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1074.

[12] See Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1074. Patriarch Methodius wrote the text now referred to as *Methodius ad Theodorum* (Τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Μεϑοδίου πρεσβυτέρου ϰαὶ ἡγουμένου εἰς τὸν βίον ϰαὶ τά λείποντα τοῦ ὁβσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νιϰολάου ἀρχιεπισϰόπου Μύρων), before 843. See Ševčenko (1983), p. 26. The life of John the Deacon is the earliest of St Nicholas that survives in Latin, and has been printed in several versions, including: *BHLSub.Hag.* 6 (Brussels: Society of Bollandists, 1898-1911), nos 6104-13; Bonnio Mombrizio, *Sanctuarium seu vitae sanctorum* vols 1-2 (Solesmes, Paris: Albertum Fontemoing, 1910, first published Milan, before 1480), as in Charles W. Jones, *The Saint Nicholas Liturgy and Its Literary Relationships (Ninth to Twelfth Centuries)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p. 8, fn. 5.

[13] For example, the miracle of the relics of St Nicholas found in sweet smelling oil when brought to Bari in 1087 was taken from *De translatione sanctissimi Nicholai archiepiscopi*, a text that is often found following the life of the saint. See, for example, Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS lat. 2627, fol. 149r-v, identified as a source for Jacopo da Voragine's 13th-century *Legenda Aurea.* See Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1076.

[14] Socii Bollandiani, ed., *Catalogus Codicum Hagiographicorum Latinorum in B.N. Parisiensi* (Brussels: Society of Bollandists, 1889-93), vol. 3, pp. 158-62, as in Jones (1978), p. 225.

[15] *BHLSub.Hag.* (1898-1911), no. 6178. See also Jones (1978), p. 225.

[16] Munich, Staatsbibliothek CLM, MS 14419, 125, no. 6, ff. 21-42, as in Jones (1963), pp. 74-89.

[17] BAV, MS GR. 821, as in Jones (1963), p. 75. Jones's source is Nicolas Carminius Falconius, *Sancti Confessoris Pontificis et celeberrimi thaumaturgi Nicolai. Acta Primigenia nuper detecta, & erupta ex unico veteri codice membranaceo Vaticano*, ed. Giuseppe de Bonis (Naples: [unknown], 1751).

Thus, when the relics of St Nicholas were brought to Italy at the close of the eleventh century, the saint already had a long-established hagiographical tradition in the West, albeit taken almost directly from the Greek. The event of the translation, however, initiated the production of an important body of literature that was unique to the Latin West. At this point, the St Nicholas Latin hagiography departs considerably from the Greek, as the translation was recorded frequently by contemporary Latin scholars but is not mentioned once in surviving Byzantine literature of the period.[18] The most significant and influential of the translation accounts are those by Niceforo and Giovanni Arcidiacono, both dated from 1088, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three. [19]

In the twelfth century, the Anglo-Norman poet known as Master Wace composed an influential life of St Nicholas, which signals a further departure from the Greek literary tradition.[20] Wace generally wrote about the Norman monarchy and the saints associated with it, and in c.1150 he composed three French narratives about St Nicholas, St Margaret, and the Conception of Our Lady.[21] Wace's work is particularly significant because it introduced new events to the St Nicholas legend which are not present in the Greek hagiography, for example St Nicholas Revives a Boy Strangled by the Devil, and the story of the Boy and the Golden Cup.[22] Wace's life also included two miracles concerning the conversion of Jews: St Nicholas and the Statue-Beating Jew, and the Jew and the Cheating Christian.[23] The latter story derives from an

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[18] According to Ševčenko (1983), p. 24.

[19] These translation accounts are discussed in Pasquale Corsi, *La traslazione di San Nicola: le fonti* (Bari: Centro Studi Nicolaiani, 1988), pp. 41-48. For a brief summary and discussion of Niceforo and Giovanni Arcidiacono (plus a third contradictory 14th-century Russian account), see Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 96-98. See also Giuseppe Praga, 'La traslazione di S. Niccolò e i primordi delle guerre normanne in adriatico: Le leggende Baresi', *ASD* 12, fasc. 70 (1932), pp. 491-502.

[20] Master Wace, *La vie de saint Nicolas par Wace, poème religieux du XII siècle publié d'apres tous les manuscrits*, in *Etudes romanes de Lund* 5, ed. Einar Ronsjö, et al (Lund: Gleerup; Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1942). See also Joel Fredell, 'The Three Clerks and St Nicholas in Medieval England', *Studies in Philology* 92, no. 2 (1995), pp. 181-202, and Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1075. Wace's life survives in 5 manuscripts, of which 4 are Anglo-Norman and date from the 13th century.

[21] See Jones (1978), p. 231.

[22] Wace (1942), p. 20, v. 1157-236; p. 17, v. 807-934. See Boureau, et al (2004), pp. 1076-77.

[23] Wace (1942), p. 15, v. 651-722; p. 16, v. 723-806.

English account, the Battle Abbey Life, so-called because it was written in 1067 by monks chosen for the task by William the Conqueror, and originally kept in Battle Abbey, built by William following his victory at Hastings.[24] The story of St Nicholas and the Statue-Beating Jew, on the other hand, has its origins within a Greek text dated around the year 900, although the story originally concerned a Saracen; the Jew is a western innovation.[25] Wace also described two stories involving innkeepers: in the first, three students are killed for their money by an innkeeper;[26] in the second, a merchant pilgrim travelling to the shrine of St Nicholas is murdered by an innkeeper who salts his body in a pickling vat to be served to guests. In both stories St Nicholas intervenes and resurrects the victims.[27] In later lives, and in representations of the life of St Nicholas in Italian art, these two stories became merged and the three students become those who are pickled by the innkeeper.

The importance of Wace's work is confirmed by succeeding St Nicholas lives, which continue to include these new legends alongside the traditional Greek ones. For example, the *Abbreviatio in gestis et miraculis sanctorum*, attributed to Jean de Mailly,[28] the *Epilogus in gesta sanctorum* by Bartholomew of Trent,[29] and the writings of Vincent of Beauvais,[30] all describe the stories of the Boy and the Golden Cup,[31] the Jew and the Cheating Christian, and St Nicholas and

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[24] *BHLSub.Hag.* (1898-1911), no. 6133. See Jones (1978), pp. 227-29; Meisen (1931), pp. 281-85.

[25] For the text, referred to as *Iconia 34* by Jones, see 'De cultu e veneratione SS. Imaginum', in Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *PL* (Paris: Migne, 1844-64), vol. 219, p. 986, as in Jones (1978), pp. 78-83.

[26] Wace (1942), v. 213-26, as in Fredell (1995), p. 182.

[27] Wace (1942), v. 1097-156, as in Fredell (1995), p. 183.

[28] Jean de Mailly, *Abbreviatio in gestis et miraculis sanctorum* (after 1225), trans. Antoine Dondaine, as *Gestes et miracles des saints*, in *Biblioteque d'histoire dominicaine* 1 (Paris: Cerf, 1947), as in Boureau, et al (2004), pp. 1074-77.

[29] Bartholomew of Trent, *Liber epilogorum in gesta sanctorum*, ed. Emore Paoli (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2001). See also Sherry L. Reames, *The* Legenda aurea*: A Reexamination of Its Paradoxical History* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), p. 3. Reames notes that there are at least 20 surviving manuscripts for the works of Jean de Mailly and Bartholomew of Trent.

[30] Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum historiale* vols 1-30 (Douai: [unknown], 1624; reprinted Graz: [unknown], 1965), as in Boureau, et al (1004), p. 1076-77.

[31] Jean de Mailly (1947), pp. 39-40; Bartholomew of Trent (2001), vol. 8, p. 24 ; Vincent of Beauvais (1965), vol. 13, p. 76, as well as others. See Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1077. The story was probably introduced in the Battle Abbey Life, see p. 28, fn. 24, above.

the Statue-Beating Jew.[32] These texts show that the Latin hagiographers were moving away from the dominant Greek lives of St Nicholas from previous centuries, and were inspired instead by an emerging Latin tradition that was first evident in the works of Wace. The writings of Jean de Mailly, Bartholomew of Trent and Vincent of Beauvais show that after the twelfth century St Nicholas was becoming recognized in his new Latin form.

Perhaps the most significant stage in the development of St Nicholas's Latin hagiography occurred in the mid-thirteenth century, with the publication of Jacapo da Voragine's canonical *Legenda Aurea*.[33] In the *Legenda Aurea*, Voragine compiled abbreviated lives of over 200 saints, from about 130 existing textual sources, ordered according to the liturgical calendar.[34] Voragine assembled the *Legenda Aurea* between 1264 and 1267, twenty years after entering the Dominican Convent at Genoa.[35] The *Legenda Aurea* was probably intended as an aide for preaching, although the text became popular as a storybook of saintly lore and immensely influential in the genre of hagiography.

In the *Legenda Aurea*, Voragine brought together many of the existing Latin lives of St Nicholas. Although the work of John the Deacon is the only specific Latin source which Voragine cites,[36] many more have been subsequently identified, and include those of Wace, Jean de Mailly, Bartholomew of Trent and Vincent of Beauvais.[37] Voragine possibly also referred to, among

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[32] The 2 stories concerning the conversion of Jews are found in: Jean de Mailly (1947), pp. 38-39; Vincent of Beauvais (1965), vol. 13, pp. 75-78.

[33] See Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 22-29. For the English translation, see Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), vol. 1, pp. 21-27.

[34] For Voragine as compiler, see the introduction in Boureau, et al (2004). Jean-Baptiste-Marie Roze has identified 130 sources quoted or referred to in the *Legenda Aurea*. See Jean-Baptiste-Marie Roze, *La Légende Dorée* vols 1-3 (Paris: Rouveyre, 1902).

[35] For the life of Voragine, see Boureau, et al (2004), p. 4.

[36] Voragine states that the 'legend [of St Nicholas] was written in Greek by the Patriarch Methodius and translated into Latin by John the Deacon, who added much to it.' Voragine also claims that 'the Life of St Nicholas was written by learned men of Argos, called Argolics'. The English translation is from Ryan (1993), p. 21; see also Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 22.

[37] See Roze (1902).

others, the writings of Ambrose of Milan,[38] Sicard of Cremona,[39] Hugo of Pisa,[40] the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great,[41] and the numerous accounts of the 1087 translation. Voragine possibly also made use of Greek sources.[42] As a result his account of the life of St Nicholas includes events popular in the Greek sources, for example the Schooling of St Nicholas and the Tree of Plakoma, as well as the new events introduced by the Latin lives, for example the stories of the conversion of Jews,[43] St Nicholas Revives a Boy Strangled by the Devil,[44] and the Boy and the Golden Cup.[45] The sources for some stories have not been identified, for example St Nicholas's miraculous selection as bishop and his ascension to heaven.

The life of St Nicholas as described in the *Legenda Aurea* has different emphases and agendas from the Greek texts. For example, the *Legenda Aurea* emphasises the miracle-working aspect of the life of St Nicholas, and underplays his church career. In the Greek texts, St Nicholas is variously described as being consecrated as a deacon, a priest, a bishop and an archbishop; in contrast the *Legenda Aurea* only mentions his consecration as a bishop, but includes details of the

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[38] Ambrose of Milan, *Sancti Ambrosii de apologia prophetae David ad Theodosium Augustum*, in *Sancti Ambrosii Opera* 2, ed. K. Schenkl, CSEL 32/2 (Prague: Verlag der Ersten Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1897), p. 327, line 10, as in Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1075.

[39] Sicardi Cremonensis Episcopi, *Chronicon*, in Migne, ed. (1844-64), vol. 213, cols 437-540. Jean de Mailly, Bartholomew of Trent and Vincent of Beauvais are identified as the 3 most important sources in a different edition of the *Legenda Aurea*: see Jacopo de Voragine, *Legenda Aurea*, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni (Varese: Galluzzo, 1998), pp. 38-48.

[40] Uguccione da Pisa, *Derivationes*, ed. Giovanni Nencioni (Florence: Academia della Crusca, 2000), p. 47, as in Ryan (1993), pp. xlii-xliii.

[41] For the *Diologues* of Gregory the Great, see, for example, Francis Clark, *The 'Gregorian' Dialogues and the Origins of Benedictine Monasticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

[42] For example, Voragine's retelling of the *Thauma de Artemide* includes the word *mydiacon*, or *Mydyaton* (see Graesse, ed. [1890], p. 24), the Greek name given to the oil concocted by the devil, and is taken from the Greek life of St Nicholas by John the Deacon (Mombrizio [1910], vol. 2, pp. 301-02), which was itself taken from the *Vita per Michaëlem*. This word can also be traced in the 11th-century *Encomium Neophyti*. See Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1076.

[43] Voragine's sources for the story of St Nicholas and the Statue-Beating Jew are identified as: Wace (1942), p. 15, v. 651-722; Jean de Mailly (1947), p. 38; Vincent of Beauvais (1965), vol. 13, p. 75; Bartholomew of Trent (2001), p. 8, as in Boureau, et al (2004), pp. 1076-77. For the story of the Jew and the Cheating Christian, Voragine's sources have been identified as: Wace (1942), p. 16, v. 723-806; Jean de Mailly (1947), p. 39; Bartholomew of Trent (2001), p. 8, as in Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1076.

[44] Voragine's source for this miracle has been identified as Wace (1942), p. 20, v. 1157-236, as in Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1077.

[45] This miracle is also described by Wace (1942), p. 17, v. 807-934; Jean de Mailly (1947), pp. 39-40; Vincent of Beauvais (1965), vol. 13, p. 76; Bartholomew of Trent (2001), p. 8, as well as others. See Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1077.

miraculous events leading to his selection. The *Legenda Aurea* also pays only passing attention to the Schooling of St Nicholas, which is described in much greater detail in many of the Greek texts.[46] Furthermore, the *Legenda Aurea* omits some earlier Greek legends, for example the stories of St Nicholas Distributes Alms and Heals a Blind Man, described by the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae* and the *Vita per Metaphrasten*, amongst others. It could be argued that by favouring more recent Latin additions to the life of St Nicholas, but paying less attention to – and even omitting – events from the Greek sources, Voragine intended to 'update' the life of St Nicholas, ensuring the story would be familiar to the *Legenda Aurea*'s Italian audience.

Voragine's work was a widespread and influential text, bringing together for the first time the disparate and varying texts that constituted the western St Nicholas hagiography. The St Nicholas presented to the reader of the *Legenda Aurea* differs considerably to the figure that is known through the earlier Greek lives; by the late-thirteenth century, St Nicholas and his life had become Latinised following a gradual assimilation of the Greek lives into the Latin hagiographical tradition. Such was the influence and wide dispersion of Voragine's work that it was this new, Latin version of the life of St Nicholas which became authoritative, signifying a permanent development within the cult of St Nicholas in the Latin West.

PART TWO: ST NICHOLAS AND THE ROMAN CHURCH

The hagiographical tradition of St Nicholas in the West reflects a gradual integration of the cult of the saint into western culture, which can be seen in the cult at Rome. The support given to St Nicholas in Rome, witnessed in the buildings dedicated to him and the ways in which the cult was promoted by the papacy, indicates that the Latinisation of St Nicholas was actively encouraged. Again, the process of integration was gradual, starting with the saint's appearance in the liturgy. By the thirteenth century, numerous monuments were dedicated to him, several popes had been

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[46] Including the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*, the *Vita Compilata*, the *Vita per Metaphrasten*, and the *Encomium Neophyti*. See Ševčenko (1983), p. 70.

named after him, and St Nicholas had been represented in some of the most significant buildings within the city.

ST NICHOLAS IN THE WESTERN LITURGY

The widespread influence of the canonical Roman liturgy in the Middle Ages would have ensured that the saints celebrated were familiar and highly recognisable. Inclusion within the liturgy confirmed official approval of a cult, and guaranteed that the saint received renewed annual attention. December 6, the day of St Nicholas's death, is mentioned in a seventh-century Latin *Passionario*, probably translated from a Greek original.[47] By the mid-twelfth century, the feast of 6 December was celebrated in the western liturgical calendar as a major feast day, observed with an Octave.[48]

The earliest surviving St Nicholas Liturgy in the West was composed by Reginald, Bishop of Eichstätt in northern Bavaria (966-91).[49] The Reginald Office of St Nicholas, which also mentions the saint's feast day on 6 December, is an early example of the popular 'historia', a category of the Roman rite which defined a full liturgy for a saint's feast day, and included antiphonies, responses, lections, orations and prayers.[50] Nicola Bux notes that the Reginald Office combined hagiographical information taken from the existing life of St Nicholas by John the

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[47] See Albert Dufourcq, 'Le Passionnaire Occidental au VIIe siècle', *MAH* 26 (1906), pp. 27-65, esp. pp. 56, 63. Dufourcq claims to have identified the *Passionario* used in Rome in the 7th century as one contained in an early-9th-century manuscript conserved in the library of Karlsruhe, the *Codex Augiensis XXXII*. See also Meisen (1931), pp. 55-56; Pollio (2006), p. 137.

[48] From the mid-12th century, 6 December was marked in western liturgical calendars by rubrics and other designations, suggesting that it was a major feast. See Bux (1987), p. 56. Bux's essay is not footnoted, but I believe it relies heavily upon the introduction to Jones (1963), esp. p. 5. Many major feasts had octaves, including Christmas, Easter and Pentecost; their observance continued for a week following the feast day. See John Martin Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: A Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 54.

[49] According to the *Anonymus Haserensis*, a literary history of Eichstätt written by an abbot of the diocese. See Migne, ed. (1844-64), vol. 146, cols 1003-26, as in Jones (1963), pp. 69-73; Bux (1987), p. 55. Jones discusses the St Nicholas liturgy which survives in the Nero Manuscript, written under the direction of the Anglo-Saxon Bishop Wulfstan and dating to 1000-60, and provides a Latin transcription of the text: see pp. 7-41.

[50] Bux (1987), p. 55.

Deacon, including the *Praxis de Stratelatis* and the story of the Three Destitute Maidens, with melodies from the Orthodox Church liturgy – Reginald had apparently travelled to Greece and southern Italy during a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.[51] Reginald's work, as one of the earliest examples of its genre, was considerably influential in shaping later liturgical works, including Thomas Aquinas's *Corpus Domini*.[52] The St Nicholas Office, as well as the life by John the Deacon, also influenced another early life of St Nicholas, written in the eleventh century by Otloh of Regensburg.[53] The liturgy was also well received by Cluniac centres, and copies of Reginald's St Nicholas liturgy were produced in many Benedictine *scriptoria*.[54] Through lifting elements from the first Latin life of St Nicholas, Reginald's Office would have played an important role in disseminating the Latin cult of St Nicholas throughout Italy and the West from a relatively early stage. This example also shows the close relationship that could exist between a saint's liturgy and hagiography.

THE EARLY CULT IN ROME: CHURCH DEDICATIONS AND FRESCO REPRESENTATIONS

The earliest visual evidence for the cult of St Nicholas in Italy survives in Rome.[55] As well as the seventh-century *Passionario* discussed above, in the eighth century an image of St Nicholas was included within the fresco decoration of the church of Sta Maria Antiqua, probably dated to the pontificate of Paul I (757-67).[56] Here St Nicholas appears in a long procession of saints on the north wall of the northern lateral nave, standing in the company of other Greek saints (Fig. 1.1).[57]

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[51] According to the *Anonymus Haserensis*. See Bux (1987), p. 55; Jones (1963), pp. 70-72.

[52] Bux (1987), p. 56; Jones (1978), p. 115.

[53] As mentioned above. Jones (1978), p. 125.

[54] Bux (1987), p. 56.

[55] For a comprehensive summary of the early cult of St Nicholas in Rome, see Pollio (2006), pp. 137-44.

[56] For the church of Sta Maria Antiqua, see John Osborne, et al, eds, *Santa Maria Antiqua al Foro Romano. Cento anni dopo* (Rome: Campisano, 2004).

[57] The group of Greek saints to the right of Christ are, left-right: Sts John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus; Basil; Peter of Alexandria; Cyril; Epiphanus; Atanasio; Nicholas of Myra; Erasmus. There may also be a representation of a narrative scene from the life of St Nicholas: a fresco fragment located near the barrier of the right-hand nave of Sta Maria Antiqua appears to represent 3 figures in prison,

St Nicholas is represented as an orthodox bishop holding a book, with white hair and beard, and identified by a Greek inscription.[58] Also in the eighth century, relics of St Nicholas were owned by the present-day church of S. Angelo in Pescheria, built by the Roman *primicerius* Theodotus.[59] The reason for the arrival of the cult of St Nicholas in Rome at this time is uncertain, but could be attributed to a Greek monastic community in Rome, or to pilgrims coming from the East to visit the tombs of the apostles.[60]

A census taken in the year 1192 lists twenty monuments dedicated to St Nicholas in Rome.[61] A further record dated around the year 1230 shows that at this time monuments dedicated to St Nicholas were the third-most common in Rome, after the Virgin and the Saviour.[62] Monuments dedicated to the saint first appeared as early as the eighth century, for example there were two oratories located near the churches of S. Lorenzo fuori le Mura and SS. Quattro Coronati.[63] The earliest surviving St Nicholas monument in Rome is the church of S. Nicola in Carcere, located by the bank of the river Tiber in the area of the Foro Olitorio, an ancient Roman marketplace. The church was constructed from the foundations and remains of

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possibly a scene from the *Praxis de Stratelates*; this suggestion is however not widely accepted. For details, see Eva Tea, *La basilica di Santa Maria Antiqua* (Milan: Società Editrice 'Vita e Pensiero', 1937), p. 178. The legend of the *Praxis de Stratelates*, which contained many individually significant events, was commonly illustrated by a series of up to 6 scenes; see p. 25, fn. 7, above. See also Ševčenko (1983), pp. 104-29.

[58] The inscription reads vertically downwards, on either side of the saint's figure. On the left: (O) (A) Γ I O C; on the right: N I K (O) (Λ) A OC. For the image of St Nicholas at Sta Maria Antiqua, see Tea (1937), p. 279. The iconography of an orthodox bishop is discussed on pp. 62-63, below. Here, St Nicholas wears an *omophorion* over a *phelonion*, and a *sticharion.*

[59] Pollio (2006), p. 137.

[60] As suggested by Pollio (2006), p. 137.

[61] The *Catalogo di Cencio Caerario* (1192) lists the following monuments dedicated to St Nicholas: S. Nicola in Carcere; S. Nicola Funariorum; S. Nicola Macelli; S. Nicola de Marmorata; S. Nicola Forbitorum; S. Nicola de Trivio; S. Nicola Arcionum; S. Nicola de Formis; S. Nicola columpne Adriani; S. Nicola de Pinea; S. Nicola Melinorum; S. Nicola inde; S. Nicola Calcariorum; S. Nicola Gregorii Cencii; S. Nicola de Coloseo; S. Nicola Prefecti; S. Nicola de Tofo; S. Nicola de Hospitali; S. Nicola de Furca; S. Nicola de Alivoto. Louis Duchesne and Paul Fabre, eds, *Le Liber Censuum de l'Eglise Romaine* (Paris: Fontemoing, Thorin , 1889-1952), vol. 1, p. 300. See also Christian C.F. Huelsen, *Le chiese di Roma nel medioevo. Cataloghi ed appunti* (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1927), pp. 10-16.

[62] According to the 1230 *catalogo Parigino*, there were 23 monuments dedicated to St Nicholas in Rome. The most common dedications were to the Virgin (73) and the Saviour (34). See Paul Fabre, *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 7 (1887), pp. 435-57, as in Huelsen (1927), pp. 19-25.

[63] For these monuments, and other early churches dedicated to St Nicholas in Rome, see Pollio (2006), pp. 137-38.

three temples, the Temples of Hope (to the south) and Giano (to the north), built around the year BC 260, and the Temple of Giunone Sospita (the central of the three), which dates to between BC 197 and 194. The greater part of the church is constructed from the *cella* and *pronaos* of the central temple, and embedded in both the north and south exterior walls of the present-day church can be seen the ancient Ionic columns of the temples (Fig. 1.2).[64] The earliest evidence verifying the existence of a church dedicated to St Nicholas on the site of the three temples dates from the last quarter of the eleventh century, although the church itself is dated at least two hundred years earlier.[65] In 1128 the church was rebuilt by Cardinal Pietro Pierleoni, of the wealthy Pierleoni family who owned property in the region, and reconsecrated by Pope Honorius II (1124-30).[66] At this time the three aisles and transept of the church were painted throughout, and the floor was embellished with a Cosmati pavement; fragments of the figurative and vegetal decoration from the crypt, dated to the thirteenth century, are preserved in the Vatican Pinacoteca.[67] The present church has been altered from the medieval original following nineteenth-century restorations.[68]

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[64] For the 3 temples which form the foundations and walls of S. Nicola in Carcere, and excavations carried out on them, see Andreina Palombi, *La basilica di San Nicola in Carcere. Il complesso architettonico dei tre temple del Foro Olitorio* (Rome: Istituto Nazionale di Studi Romani, 2006), esp. pp. 31-53. See pp. 55ff for the transformation of the temples into the Christian basilica. See also Vincenzo Fasolo, *I tre templi a S. Nicola in Carcere. Rilievi e studio architettonico* (Rome: Grafia, 1925).

[65] Evidence for the church of St Nicholas includes a long epigraph, located on the wall of the right-hand nave, which details donations given to the church during the pontificate of Urban II (1088-99). The inscription mentions: 'Romanus presbyter…sanctissimi confessoris Christi Nicolai ecclesie que in Carcere dicitur, procurator vel rector.' See Palombi (2006), p. 63; Huelsen (1927), p. 392. For the dating, see Palombi (2006), pp. 66-72.

[66] Palombi (2006), pp. 27, 93-94. An inscription commemorating the reconsecration survives, now located on the right-hand wall of the nave: † ANNO DNICAE INCAR•NATIONIS•M•C•XXVIII • PONTIFICAT: DNI HONORII• II• PP III XII DIE MSIS MADII IND VI DDICATA E HAEC ECLA IN HONORE SCI NICOLAI CF• See Palombi (2006), p. 63.

[67] The original fresco decoration of the crypt of S. Nicola in Carcere has mostly been lost, apart from some sections removed for preservation. In 1466 the titular Cardinal of the church, Rodrigo Borgia, built a wall blocking access to the crypt, and access was only regained in 1591 by the future Cardinal Federico Borromeo. Descriptions recorded at this time claim that the decoration contained representations of Popes Felix IV and Boniface IV, martyrs and prophets, and scenes of the Flagellation and Crucifixion of Christ. Apart from the 5 prophet roundels and decorative fresco scenes containing birds, rabbits and vegetation, which were removed during 19th-century renovations first to the Lateran Museum then the Vatican Pinacoteca in 1926, all figurative scenes have been lost. See Antonio Iacobini, 'Gli affreschi della cripta di San Nicola in Carcere', in *Fragmenta picta. Affreschi e mosaici staccati del medioevo romano*, ed. Maria Andaloro, et al (Rome: Castel Sant'Angelo, 15 Dec. 1989-18 Feb. 1990), pp. 197-204.

[68] The church was restored by Pope Pio IX in 1865. See Palombi (2006), pp. 97-234.

The dedication of the church suggests an interesting alternative role for the cult of St Nicholas in Rome. The original dedication of the church was probably to the Saviour,[69] and was most likely changed to St Nicholas by Pope Urban II (1088-99), perhaps in recognition of both the saint's recent translation to Bari and of the Greek community within the region. The name 'in carcere' signifies the presence of a prison close to the church from the end of the eleventh century.[70] The cult of St Nicholas is thus connected to the prison, reflecting the saint's role as a patron of prisoners and condemned men, which he earned because of the *Praxis de Stratelates* legend in which he freed three wrongly accused generals. In Rome, the cult of St Nicholas was therefore able to respond to the extremes of society, in particular prisoners and the condemned, as well as popes and the elite.

Besides the image of St Nicholas in the church of Sta Maria Antiqua, only three other fresco representations of the saint survive in Rome from the Middle Ages. These are located in the churches of S. Clemente and S. Saba, and the *Sancta Sanctorum*; the latter will be discussed later in this chapter. A fifth fresco, representing the Concordat of Worms in the Lateran Palace, was destroyed in the eighteenth century and is known today through drawings; this memorial will also be discussed in the following section.

At the church of S. Clemente, St Nicholas is represented in a large fresco reaching nearly fourteen feet in height, located on a pier on the left-hand side of the nave of the lower church (Fig. 1.3).[71] The fresco is dated to the time of an eleventh-century restoration of the church, and

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[69] According to an unidentified renaissance document and an 18th-century inscription in the church; see Palombi (2006), p. 64. For the re-dedication of S. Nicola in Carcere to St Nicholas by the Pierleoni, the family of Urban II, see Louis Duchesne, ed., *Le Liber Pontificalis* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1955-57), vol. 2, p. 294.

[70] See Palombi (2006), p. 26; Pollio (2006), p. 138.

[71] The church of S. Clemente, located behind the Colosseum on the way to the church of S. Giovanni in Laterano, has a complicated building history. The lower church is an early Christian basilica, restored in the 9th and 11th centuries. In the 12th century, the present, upper church was constructed on top of the lower church. For the building history of S. Clemente, see Joan E. Barclay Lloyd, 'The Building History of the Medieval Church of S. Clemente in Rome', *JSAH* 45 (1986), pp. 197-223.

represents the story of St Alexis in three episodes.[72] Above the narrative scenes appears a row of figures. Here the fresco is badly damaged, and only the bottom half of the figures survive; they can however be identified by prominent inscriptions. In the centre is represented the enthroned Christ flanked by the Archangel Michael and St Clement to the viewer's left, and the Archangel Gabriel and St Nicholas to the right. Several explanations have been offered for St Nicholas's appearance within this fresco. The saint appears as a pendant to the image of St Clement. This arrangement could represent a homage to Pope Nicholas I (858-67), who oversaw the acquisition of the relics of St Clement to Rome from Cherson on the Black Sea in the tenth century.[73] St Nicholas may also have been chosen in celebration of his own relics that had only recently been brought to Italy from the East. Similarities between these two saints could be a further explanation for their pairing. Both saints came to Italy from the East, they both saved a child from drowning, and they were both bishops who defended orthodoxy and are associated with clerical reform.[74] This was a particular concern for the titular cardinals of S. Clemente, who supported the issues raised by the Gregorian Reform of the church, which will be discussed below.[75]

The fresco in the church of S. Saba, a Benedictine monastery located on the Aventine Hill,[76] represents a narrative scene: *The Three Destitute Maidens* (Fig. 1.4). The scene is depicted on the north wall of the far northern nave, which was added to the church as a fouth nave in the thirteenth century and is referred to as the 'quarta navata'.[77] The fresco is part of a larger programme which also includes an enthroned Virgin and Christ between S. Saba and an anonymous saint, and the figure of St Nicholas between two saints. The programme, which

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[72] The late-11th century restoration affected the southern side and façade of the building, and 2 piers were built around columns in the nave for additional support, which were later painted. For the dating of the fresco, and the 11th-century restoration, see Barclay Lloyd (1986), pp. 199-201. For the fresco and the story of St Alexis, see Luke Dempsey, ed., *San Clemente Miscellany. 2: Art & Archaeology* (Roma: Apud S. Clementem, 1978), pp. 83-84.

[73] See Pollio (2006), pp. 138-39.

[74] Ibid., pp. 138-39. The importance of St Nicholas for clerical reform will be discussed below, see pp. 42-43. For the life of St Clement, see Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 777-88. See also Dempsey (1978), p. 85.

[75] Barclay Lloyd (1986), pp. 201-02.

[76] For the church of S. Saba, see Carlo la Bella, *San Saba. Chiese di Roma illustrate* (Rome: Palombi, 2003).

[77] la Bella (2003), p. 48.

originally continued onto other walls, is dated to the last quarter of the thirteenth century and was painted by an anonymous artist from the workshop of Jacopo Torriti.[78]

St Nicholas was thus represented within the decoration of prominent buildings at Rome from a very early stage in the cult's development, and, as far as we know because of the gaps in the surviving evidence, before the saint's image became widespread throughout Italy. The image of St Nicholas at Sta Maria Antiqua is particularly significant because it reveals how the cult of St Nicholas was initially understood at the heart of the Latin Church. In addition, the numerous churches and chapels dedicated to the saint indicate that his cult could respond to diverse needs and social groups, and that it was supported by the elite sector of Roman society. This support can be seen especially clearly within the papacy.

THE PAPACY

By the thirteenth century, the cult of St Nicholas was present and well-established within a wide variety of contexts in Rome. A crucial element in the development of the cult in Rome, and ultimately in the Latinisation of St Nicholas, was the papacy. The support of individual popes has been well documented; the summary below will provide an impression of how St Nicholas was viewed by the leaders of the Latin Church, the roles that this saint could play, and the ways in which the cult of St Nicholas became further integrated within Italian religious life.

NICHOLAS I (858-67)

From the sixth century, newly-elected popes began to change their baptismal names.[79] Papal names were carefully chosen, often intended as honorific to a predecessor or reflective of a particular devotion. They were indicative of loyalty, and signified the subject of the pope's future

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[78] For the frescoes, see la Bella (2003), pp. 48-50.

[79] In the year 533, Mercurius was elected as Pope, but chose to change his name to John II because of the pagan connotations of the name Mercurius. Succeeding popes followed suit, although it was not compulsory and some chose to keep their baptismal names.

emulation, either through particular policies or general reputation.[80] In the mid-ninth century, a deacon from a noble Roman family was elected at the recommendation of Emperor Louis II, and named himself Nicholas.[81]

The name Nicholas, stemming from the Greek words *nicos*, meaning victory, and *laos*, meaning people,[82] was rare in the West in the early Middle Ages. Charles W. Jones notes that before the pontificate of Nicholas I, he had only encountered the name Nicholas in the Latin West once in the Gothic father of Bishop Eugenius II of Toledo (646-57).[83] It is probable, therefore, that the cult of St Nicholas, which by the ninth century had been present in Rome for two centuries, may have inspired the pope's choice of name. Nicholas I had a personal devotion to St Nicholas, and the pope reportedly built an oratory near the church of Sta Maria in Cosmedin, located very close to S. Nicola in Carcere, 'in honore sancti martyris Christi Nicolai', to which he made many donations.[84] Nicholas I also built a chapel dedicated to St Nicholas near the church of S. Giovanni in Laterano.[85]

The name Nicholas later became an established papal name, and in 1058 Gerard, Bishop of Florence, chose the name Nicholas II upon his papal election.[86] In the year 1277 Cardinal Giovanni Gaetani Orsini became Pope Nicholas III; in 1288 the Franciscan Cardinal Girolamo Masci became Pope Nicholas IV, and in 1447 Cardinal Tommaso Parentucelli was elected pope, taking the name Nicholas V.[87]

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[80] See Giles Constable, 'Papal, Imperial and Monastic Propaganda in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', in *Predication et propaganda au Moyen Age: Islam, Byzance, Occident*, ed. George Makdisi, et al (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1983), p. 184.

[81] For the pontificate of Nicholas I, see Duchesne, ed. (1955-57), vol. 2, pp. 151-72. See also Frederick A. Norwood, 'The Political Pretensions of Pope Nicholas I', *Church History* 15, no. 4 (Dec. 1946), pp. 271-85.

[82] As stated by Voragine at the beginning of his St Nicholas entry. See Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 22.

[83] Jones (1978), pp. 86-87.

[84] Duchesne, ed. (1955-57), vol. 2, p. 161. See also Pollio (2006), p. 138.

[85] Pollio (2006), p. 138. The sources for the Lateran chapel are Duchesne, ed. (1955-57), vol. 2, pp. 166, 176.

[86] For Pope Nicholas II (1058-61), see Duchesne, ed. (1955-57), vol. 2, p. 280.

[87] For Pope Nicholas III (1277-80), see the chapter by Alessandro Tomei, 'Un modello di committenza papale: Niccolò III e Roma', in *Sancta Sanctorum*, eds Julian Gardner, et al (Milan: Electa, 1995), pp. 192-201; for Pope Nicholas IV (1288-92), see Antonino Franchi, *Nicolaus Papa IV 1288-1292 (Girolamo*

URBAN II (1088-99)

Evidently, the cult of St Nicholas received papal approval from a relatively early stage. In later centuries, the saint gained greater importance for the papacy, and during the pontificate of Urban II, St Nicholas was brought into the sphere of ecclesiastical politics.[88]

The high regard that Pope Urban II held for St Nicholas has been previously implied, as the pope was responsible for the rededication of the church of S. Nicola in Carcere. In addition, on 9 May 1089, the pope was present in Bari to attend the translation of the relics of St Nicholas into the newly-completed crypt in the church of S. Nicola. In this year, Urban II declared that the day of the saint's translation from Myra to Bari, which occurred just two years previously also on 9 May, should be celebrated as a major feast day in the diocese of Bari.[89] Thus, in a liturgical calendar from the Archivio di S. Nicola at Bari dated to the second half of the thirteenth century, both the 'traslatio S. Nicolai' on 9 May, as well as the saint's traditional feast day, are mentioned.[90]

Nine years later Urban II returned to Puglia to convene the Council of Bari, held on 3 October 1098 in the church of S. Nicola, in front of the tomb of St Nicholas.[91] The Council was attended by 185 Latin and Greek bishops, as well as local ecclesiastic figures, Norman counts, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the future St Anselm.[92] Urban II had two agendas for the

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d'Ascoli) (Ascoli Piceno: Cassa di risparmio di Ascoli Piceno, 1990); for Pope Nicholas V (1447-55), see Manetti Giannozzo, *De vita ac gestis Nicolai quinti summi pontificis*, ed. Anna Modigliani (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 2005).

[88] For Pope Urban II, see Duchesne, ed. (1955-57), vol. 2, pp. 293-95.

[89] The bull issued by Urban II on 5 October 1089, stating that 9 May should be a recognised feast day of St Nicholas, can be found in Francesco Nitti di Vito, ed., *CDB. Volume 1: Le pergamene del duomo di Bari (952-1264)* (Bari: Vecchi, 1897), pp. 61-63, no. 33. See also Bux (1987), p. 56.

[90] The calendar, recorded as a *brevario notato*, is found in Bari, Archivio di S. Nicola, MS 1 (7), ff. 1-6v, as in Nicola Bux, *I codici liturgici miniati dell'archivio di S. Nicola* (Bari: Centro Studi Nicolaiani, 1983), p. 7.

[91] According to the accounts of some attendants, the council took place 'intus in Ecclesia Beatissimi Nicolay', and 'ante corpus beati Nicolai'. William of Malmesbury, *De gestis pontificum anglorum libri quinque*, in Migne, ed. (1844-64), vol. 179, book 1, col. 1492, as in Cioffari (1984), p. 93, fn. 5. For the Council of Bari, see Salvatore Palese and Giancarlo Locatelli, eds, *Il Concilio di Bari del 1098: atti del convegno storico internazionale e celebrazioni del IX centenario del concilio* (Bari: Edipuglia, 1999).

[92] For the attendees of the Council, see Gerardo Cioffari, 'Il Concilio di Bari del 1098. Uomini ed eventi', in Palese and Locatelli, eds (1999), pp. 109-21.

Council of Bari: to attempt the unification of the Latin and Greek Churches, and to preach the crusades.[93] Relations between Rome and Constantinople had been particularly troublesome in the eleventh century. The complicated schism concerning the relative supremacy of the papacy and patriarchate, begun in the ninth century by the Byzantine Patriarch Photius, had been widening, and the relationship between the pope and emperor further deteriorated in 1078 when Pope Gregory VII (1073-85) excommunicated Emperor Nicephorus III (1078-81). Furthermore, in 1059 the papacy became allied to the Norman rulers of southern Italy, who were in the process of conquering long-established Byzantine territories in the region.[94] However, when Urban II ascended to the papal throne the situation began to improve. The state of excommunication that had been inherited by Emperor Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118) was lifted, and consequently the Latin churches in Constantinople were reopened. Urban II promised that the Norman advance in southern Italy would cease, and in 1095 he responded to the emperor's plea for support against the Muslim threat in Constantinople and the Holy Land.[95] At the Council of Bari, Urban II hoped to use the improved relations with the emperor to bring an end to the schism, while reasserting his support of mutual cooperation for the coming fight against the Muslims in the East.

Urban II's Council convened within the church of S. Nicola at Bari. As this thesis shows, St Nicholas was important for the Byzantine emperors, the Norman monarchy and the papacy alike. It was perhaps recognised that a monument associated with the cult of St Nicholas would provide a common spiritual ground for all parties of the Council. As an orthodox saint popular in both the East and the West, St Nicholas may have been considered an ideal symbol for the cooperation of the Roman and Orthodox Churches, as well as a role model to be emulated by

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[93] For details of Urban II's policies regarding the unification of the Latin and Greek churches, see Alfons Becker, 'Urbain II e l'Orient', and Giancarlo Andenna, 'Urbano II e la questione dell'unita della Chiese cristiane d'Oriente e d'Occidente', both in Palese and Locatelli, eds (1999), pp. 123-44, 317-26. For Urban II's role in the First Crusade, see Becker (1999), pp. 135-44. See also Donald M. Nicol, 'Byzantium and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century', *JEccH* 13, no. 1 (1962), pp. 1-20. The role of the crusades in perpetuating the cult of St Nicholas will be discussed in Chapter 3.

[94] For the East-West schism, and the role played by individuals of the papacy and Byzantine hierarchy, see Nicol (1962).

[95] For the negotiations between Urban II and Alexius I, see Nicol (1962), pp. 15-16.

bishops everywhere. By involving the cult of St Nicholas in the Council of Bari, and by association the great schism, St Nicholas was assigned the role of pacifier and mediator, a very useful tool for a pope attempting reconciliation. Urban II had previously given the saint this role when, in 1091, he sent a gift of a sample of the relics of St Nicholas from Bari to the rulers of Kiev in Rus', in an earlier attempt to bridge the rift between the Roman and Orthodox Churches.[96] In the year 989 Kiev, the largest of the Slav states, had converted to orthodox Christianity and to Byzantine culture, and throughout the schism remained loyal and obedient to the patriarch of Constantinople.[97] St Nicholas had been venerated in Kiev since the ninth century;[98] a gift of his relics would have been recognised as a very powerful gesture on behalf of the pope. It is likely therefore that the involvement of the cult of St Nicholas within the healing process of the schism was deliberate.

St Nicholas was, however, already linked to the schism before Urban II brought his Council before the saint's tomb. A main cause and source of debate for the East-West schism was disagreement over the dogma of the *filioque*, in other words, the Latin belief that Christ has a divine nature, that the Holy Ghost proceeds from both the Father and the Son together, and that all three parts of the Holy Trinity possess the same substance of divine essence.[99] In the fourth century the Arians believed that the son, while part of the Trinity, was not of the same substance and was instead an intermediator between God and earth and therefore not eternal. In 325, the Council of Nicaea was convened to express the divinity of Christ in the face of the Arian heresies. According to some of the Greek lives, St Nicholas was present at the Council of Nicaea and spoke in condemnation of Arianism.[100]

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[96] See Lidov (2006), pp. 77-88, esp. p. 87, fn. 11.

[97] Nicol (1962), pp. 1, 12.

[98] For an overview of the cult of St Nicholas in Rus' and Kiev, see Lidov (2006), pp. 77-88.

[99] See Deno J. Gaenakoplos, 'The Council of Florence (1438-1439) and the Problem of the Union between the Greek and Latin Churches', *Church History* 24, no. 4 (Dec. 1955), pp. 331-33.

[100] See, for example, the *Vita Compilata*, *Vita per Metaphrasten* and *Encomium Neophyti*. There is however no historical evidence for St Nicholas's presence at the council. See Ševčenko (1983), p. 18. For the First Council of Nicaea, and its objective to combat Arianism, see Robert M. Grant, 'Religion and Politics at the Council at Nicaea', *JR* 55, no. 1 (Jan. 1975), pp. 1-12.

The association of St Nicholas with Councils in the fourth and eleventh centuries shows that St Nicholas had long played a role in important events in church history, whether real or legendary. In the eleventh century, Pope Urban II used the earthly remains of St Nicholas as propaganda in his campaign of unification, showing the powerful role that a saint could play, and the importance attributed to St Nicholas by some of the most influential leaders of the Middle Ages.

CALIXTUS II (1119-24) AND THE LATERAN CHAPEL

During the pontificate of Calixtus II, St Nicholas was once again to play a highly visible role within church politics.[101] While the schism between the Latin and Orthodox Churches continued to widen in the eleventh century, Rome was embroiled in an additional controversy with the Holy Roman Emperor. The Reform movement, initiated during the pontificate of Gregory VII, sought to achieve total independence for the church from lay authorities. Also known as the Investiture dispute, the main issues for the Reform popes were the relations between the church and state and the freedom of ecclesiastical elections. They sought to ensure that the papacy alone, and not temporal powers, had the authority to invest ecclesiastical offices.[102]

The Investiture dispute was finally resolved by Calixtus II. In 1122 the pope and the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V reached an agreement that was recorded in the Concordat of Worms, and sanctioned by the First Lateran Council held on 18 March in the same year.[103] In celebration of this victory, Calixtus II erected a papal chapel dedicated to St Nicholas in the Lateran Palace. The chapel was probably built on the foundations of the ancient oratory of St Cestaire in Vestiaro, and was completely destroyed by Pope Benedict XIV in 1747 during rebuilding works in the

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[101] For the pontificate of Calixtus II, see Duchesne, ed. (1955-57), vol. 2, pp. 322-26; vol. 3, pp. 167-69.

[102] For Gregory VII, see Duchesne, ed. (1955-57), vol. 2, pp. 282-92. For the Reform movement and the Investiture dispute, see Ian Stuart Robinson, *The Papacy 1073-1198: Continuity and Innovation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Stanley A. Chodorow, 'Ecclesiastical Politics and the Ending of the Investiture Contest: The Papal Election of 1119 and the Negotiations of Mouzon', *Speculum* 46, no. 4 (Oct. 1971), pp. 613-40.

[103] For the resolution between the pope and emperor, the Concordat of Worms, and the First Lateran Council, see Chodorow (1971), pp. 613-40.

palace.[104] Giles Constable argues that the choice of St Nicholas for the dedication of the chapel was very likely propagandist, as well as an honorary tribute to the saint's namesake, Pope Nicholas I. As discussed above, this ninth-century pope was a supporter of the cult of St Nicholas; he was also one of the most influential popes for the Reform party, because he wrote numerous letters asserting the authority and independence of the Roman Church.[105] By dedicating his chapel to St Nicholas, Calixtus II both promoted the cult of St Nicholas within one of the most important buildings in Rome, and tied the saint to the Investiture dispute, reaffirming a link that was perhaps first established in the fresco representation of the saint in the church of S. Clemente. In these monuments, St Nicholas stood for papal superiority and victory.

Calixtus II's St Nicholas chapel had a further significance: during the pontificate of the Antipope Anacletus II (1131-38), the apse of the chapel was decorated with a large fresco, a pictorial allegory representing the papal victory recorded in the Concordat of Worms. Although destroyed, this fresco is known from several descriptions and sketches (Fig. 1.5).[106] The earliest of these are attributed to the late-fifteenth-century painter Pietro Sabino, and the early-seventeenth-century writer Giacomo Grimaldi.[107] According to these sources, the fresco contained an inscription recording the roles of Calixtus II and Anacletus II in the building and decoration of the St Nicholas chapel:

> Calixtus first built this temple from its foundations
> A man famed far and wide and of gentle Gallic blood.

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[104] Calixtus's patronage of the St Nicholas chapel is described in the *Liber Pontificalis*. See Duchesne, ed. (1955-57), vol. 2, p. 323. For the chapel, see Lauer (1911), pp. 162, 168; Huelsen (1927), pp. 391-92.

[105] See Constable (1983), p. 184.

[106] For the descriptions and copies of the fresco, see: Lauer (1911), pp. 163-72; Charles Rufus Morey, *Lost Mosaics and Frescoes of Rome of the Mediaeval Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1915), pp. 64-70; Gerhart Burian Ladner, *I ritratti dei Papi nell'antichita e nel medioevo* (Vatican City: Pontificio istituto di archeologia cristiana, 1941-84), vol. 1, pp. 202-17.

[107] See Giovanni Battista de Rossi, eds, *Inscriptiones christianae urbis Romae septimo saeculo antiquiores* (Rome: Libraria Pontificia and P. Cuggiani, 1861-1915), vol. 2, p. 427, no. 59 ; Eugène Müntz, 'Recherches sur l'oeuvre archéologique de Jacques Grimaldi, ancien archiviste de la basilique du Vaticane d'après les manuscrits conservés à Rome, à Florence, à Milan, à Turin, et à Paris', *Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome* 1 (1877), p. 253.

The pontiff Anacletus, enthroned on the supreme seat of the papacy,
Adorned the work and beautified it in various ways.[108]

The figures represented in the fresco were divided into two registers. In the top register the enthroned Virgin and Child were flanked by two angels and St Sylvester on the viewer's left, and St Anacletus on the right, with Pope Calixtus II and the Antipope Anacletus II kneeling at the Virgin's feet, both with square haloes.[109] In the lower register, St Nicholas stood within a central apse-like structure, flanked on both sides by popes identified by inscriptions. Left to right, the popes were: Gelasius II, Pascal II, Urban II, St Leo the Great, (St Nicholas), St Gregory the Great, Alexander II, Gregory VII and Victor III. As well as the saintly Popes Leo and Gregory the Great, this selection of popes included the predecessors of Calixtus II, each of whom played a role within the Investiture dispute. The fresco was evidently a successful victory monument as it reached a wide audience: authors from across Europe are known to have remarked on the frescoes of the Lateran Palace.[110]

St Nicholas occupied a very prominent position within the apse fresco. As the titular saint of the chapel his presence is to be expected; however, the link between the saint and the Investiture dispute is here made explicit. The fresco celebrated the victory of the papacy, and St Nicholas was considered a suitable patron both to support the papacy and endorse its victory. St Nicholas is generally accepted amongst modern scholars as a saint who was later specifically

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[108] 'SVSTVLIT HOC PRIMO TEMPLVM CALLISTVS AB IMO / VIR CELEBRIS LATE GALLORVM NOBILATATE. / PRAESVL ANACLETVS PAPATVS CVLMINE FRETVS / HOC OPVS ORNAVIT VARIISQVE MODIS DECORAVIT.' The transcription and English translation are from Morey (1915), p. 68. Drawings and descriptions of the fresco do not agree on the content of this inscription. See Lauer (1911), pp. 169-70; Ladner (1941), pp. 206-08; Morey (1915), pp. 65-70.

[109] The drawing by Eclissi identifies the figure to the right of the Virgin as S. Anastasius, and the pope kneeling to her right as Pope Anastasius III. However, it is argued, and generally agreed, that the identifying inscriptions for these figures have been incorrectly transcribed, or were at some point altered, and that in fact they represent St Anacletus, Bishop of Rome in the 1st century, and the Antipope Anacletus II. See Ladner (1941), pp. 206-08. Lauer (1911), pp. 169-70; Morey (1915), p. 68-69.

[110] These authors include Otto of Freising, Bishop Arnulf of Lisieux and John of Salisbury. See Constable (1983), p. 186.

evoked because of his importance to the Reform popes.[111] John Osborne argues that it was for precisely this reason that St Nicholas was included amongst the group of four saints in the late-twelfth-century mosaics of the south dome of S. Marco in Venice.[112] Each of the saints represented in the dome played an important role for the papacy in the eleventh century: St Clement was an early successor to Peter as the Bishop of Rome, and his church in the city was lavishly rebuilt at the beginning of the eleventh century. The saint wrote a narration about St Peter's triumph over Simon Magus which became a canonical text in the Reform's campaign against simony.[113] St Blaise was a model bishop whose image appeared in the frescoes of Sta Maria Antiqua and S. Clemente, and who supposedly cured Pope Leo IX (1048-54), one of the early Reform popes.[114] St Leonard, an important saint during the crusades, was represented in other buildings associated with the Reform movement, including the church of Sta Maria Immacolata at Ceri, which also displayed an early-twelfth-century image of St Nicholas (Fig. 1.6).[115]

Two later representations of St Nicholas suggest that the saint's association with the Reform movement was widely understood. In the apse of the cathedral of Monreale, built by the Norman King William II (1166-89) and decorated with Byzantine mosaics around the year 1183,[116] St Nicholas appears alongside other saints with connections to the papacy and the Reform movement (Fig. 1.7). During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Norman rulers of southern Italy had been allied to the papacy in its war against the Holy Roman Emperor,

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[111] See, for example: Morey (1915); Constable (1983); John Osborne, 'The Hagiographic Programme of the Mosaics in the South Dome of San Marco at Venice', *RACAR* 22, nos 1-2 (1995), pp. 19-28; Nino M. Zchomelidse, 'Tradition and Innovation in Church Decoration in Rome and Ceri around 1100', *RJK* 30 (1995), pp. 7-26.

[112] Osborne (1995), p. 20.

[113] See Herbert Edward John Cowdrey, *The Age of Abbot Desiderius. Montecassino, the Papacy, and the Normans in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 83-85; Osborne (1995), p. 21. For the rebuilding of S. Clemente, see Barclay Lloyd (1986), pp. 197-223.

[114] See *Sancti Leonis Vita*, in Migne, ed. (1844-64), vol. 143, cols 481-83, as in Osbourne (1995), p. 22.

[115] Osbourne (1995), pp. 22-23; Richardson (2007). For the church of Sta Maria Immacolata at Ceri, see Zchomelidse (1995), pp. 7-26; Nino M. Zchomelidse, *Santa Maria Immacolata in Ceri. Pittura sacra al tempo della Riforma Gregoriana* (Rome: Archivio Guido Izzi, 1996).

[116] For the building and decoration of the cathedral of Monreale, see Otto Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily* (London: Routledge and Paul, 1950), pp. 91-177.

providing military and financial support, allowing investiture by the pope, and swearing oaths of loyalty.[117] The apse mosaics at Monreale reflect these pro-Roman policies, and Otto Demus has noted that the fourteen saints in the lower tier are arranged in corresponding pairs in order to communicate this support. For example, Sts Clement and Sylvester were paired as early popes; Sts Stephen and Lawrence were the *protomartyr* and archdeacon who died defending the church against the aspirations of temporal rulers, and whose relics were at Rome; St Blaise, as mentioned above, represented the model bishop and his corresponding saint, St Hilary, was an opponent of Arianism. St Nicholas is paired with St Martin, to represent the Italian and French patron saints of the Norman monarchy. Additionally, St Martin was a bishop saint who spoke out against the interference of temporal powers within the Church.[118] At Monreale, therefore, St Nicholas was included within the apse programme in part because of his cult's earlier association with the Reform movement.

In the lower tier of the apse mosaics at Monreale, St Thomas Becket is depicted for the first time in monumental art outside England, following his recent canonisation in 1170.[119] His corresponding saint within the apse program is St Peter of Alexandria, chosen because he upheld orthodoxy against pagan authorities.[120] When Thomas Becket became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1161, his loyalties became realigned to the papacy and he was forced to oppose his ally King Henry II's ecclesiastical jurisdiction. St Thomas Becket is present at Monreale as a representative of anti-royal power within the Church, a role which during his lifetime led to his martyrdom.[121] In a fresco of c.1200 from the church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo at Spoleto, St Thomas Becket is

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[117] William II and Prince Tancred both took oaths of loyalty to the pope, and in 1080 Duke Robert Guiscard was invested by Pope Gregory VII. For the relationship between the Normans and the papacy, see Robinson (1990), pp. 302-67.

[118] See Demus (1950), pp. 128-29. The saints in the lower tier of the apse are, left-right: Sts Agatha, Anthony, Blaise, Martin, Stephen, Peter of Alexandria, Clement, Silvester, Thomas Becket, Lawrence, Nicholas, Hilary, Benedict, Mary Magdalen. The pairs are formed laterally from the centre.

[119] Demus (1950), p. 130.

[120] As suggested by Demus (1950), p. 130. For St Peter of Alexandria, see St Methodius of Olympus, *The Writings of Methodius, Alexander of Lycopolis, Peter of Alexandria, and Several Fragments* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906).

[121] For the life of St Thomas Becket, see Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 66-69.

represented alongside St Nicholas (Fig. 1.8); perhaps a similar motive was behind the pairing of the saints as of those at Monreale, indicating that St Nicholas was recognised for his importance to papal reform outside of Rome.[122]

During the pontificate of Calixtus II, therefore, the cult of St Nicholas was once again promoted in association with events central to contemporary ecclesiastical concerns, an association that would remain pertinent for the saint in later centuries.

NICHOLAS III (1277-80)

In the thirteenth century, the image of St Nicholas appeared again within the Lateran Palace complex, in the fresco and mosaic decoration of the *Sancta Sanctorum*, the papal palace chapel restored by Pope Nicholas III.[123] The new *Sancta Sanctorum* chapel was consecrated on 4 June 1278/9, and follows a simple plan of a rectangular structure with a vaulted ceiling and a shallow niche-like apse at the east end. The *Sancta Sanctorum* has been described as unique, not only because it is the one complete decorative program which survives from the pontificate of Nicholas III, an enthusiastic patron of buildings, but also because it is the only papal programme which survives within a building designed and built specifically for its display.[124] The arrangement of the fresco scenes within the small oratory, and their spatial relationship to one another, are vital to understanding their meaning.

The thirteenth-century fresco decoration of the chapel, which has been heavily restored and repainted, runs above the stringcourse of all four internal walls (Fig. 1.9).[125] In the four

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[122] Besides the representations of Sts Nicholas and Thomas at Monreale and Spoleto, I am aware of the two saints appearing together on only one other occasion, in the 13th-century frescoes of the church of S. Speco, Subiaco. See Meisen (1931), p. 197.

[123] The original chapel of S. Lorenzo, commonly referred to as the *Sancta Sanctorum*, had existed from at least the 8th century, but was probably rendered unsound by an earthquake in 1277, prompting Nicholas III's restoration project. See Gardner (May 1973), pp. 283-94; for the earlier chapel, see p. 284.

[124] Gardner (May 1973), pp. 283, 288.

[125] For the fresco decoration of the *Sancta Sanctorum*, see Serena Romano, 'Il *Sancta Sanctorum*: gli affreschi', in Gardner, et al, eds (1995), pp. 38-125. For the 16th- and 18th-century restorations, see Gianluigi Colalucci, 'I problemi del restauro degli affreschi del Santa Sanctorum', in Gardner, et al, eds (1995), pp. 224-29; Gardner (May 1973), p. 288, fn. 29.

sections of the ceiling vault appear the symbols of the Evangelists, and in each of the lunettes beneath the vault are two almost-square scenes separated by a window and surrounded by angels and foliate decoration. In the east lunette, above the apse, the left-hand scene displays the *Presentation of Pope Nicholas III*. In this scene, Sts Peter and Paul present the kneeling pope to the figure of Christ, who is represented enthroned in the next scene to the right of the window. Following the sequence around the chapel from left to right, the south wall depicts first *The Crucifixion of St Peter* then *The Execution of St Paul*, on the west wall appear *The Martyrdom of St Agnes* and *A Legend of St Nicholas*, and on the north wall are *The Lapidation of St Stephen* and *The Martyrdom of St Lawrence*. The apse also has a narrow vaulted ceiling which displays, in mosaic, the bust of Christ within a medallion supported by four angels. In the lunettes below the apse vault are the busts of the saints who are represented in the fresco programme; St Nicholas appears on the north wall lunette with his name inscribed (Fig. 1.10).[126]

The legend of St Nicholas depicted is *The Three Destitute Maidens* and is dated to the year 1300 (Fig. 1.11). This image is contemporary to the fresco of the same scene at the church of S. Saba, yet despite their close dates the iconography of the two scenes differs. In the *Sancta Sanctorum* scene, two episodes from the narrative of the charitable act of the saint play out within the one scene: to the right, St Nicholas throws a bag of gold through a window towards the reclining figure of the father and his three sleeping daughters, while to the left, the saint is confronted by the father who offers his gratitude. At S. Saba, only the act of throwing a bag of gold through the window is represented. Small similarities are notable between the two scenes. For example, in both cases St Nicholas reaches over the edge of a window or balcony with his right hand, lowering a pale-coloured bag bulging with coins. Despite this shared feature, the general lack of a direct iconographical relationship between the two scenes suggest they were part of an established tradition of the scene in Rome, which provided alternative sources for the S.

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[126] For the mosaic decoration of the apse, see Maria Andaloro, 'I mosaici del *Sancta Sanctorum*', in Gardner, et al, eds (1995), pp. 126-91.

Saba and *Sancta Sanctorum* representations. The repeated presence of the scene indicates that the charitable nature of St Nicholas was a desired aspect of the saint's personality, and was considered appropriate for the monastic context of the church of S. Saba.

Julian Gardner notes that the choice of figures depicted and the specific corresponding locations of the fresco scenes in the *Sancta Sanctorum* create intentional relationships. For example, the *Crucifixion of St Peter* appears immediately after the image of Christ, acting as a reminder of Christ's fate. St Lawrence, the patron of the chapel, appears in an honoured position adjacent to the east wall, opposite the entrance to the chapel, making this scene one of the first to be seen upon entering. Most significantly, St Nicholas appears directly opposite Pope Nicholas III.[127] The pope favoured St Nicholas by choosing his name, and the relative locations of the scenes emphasise St Nicholas as the pope's namesake. Before he became Nicholas III, Giovanni Gaetano Orsini's cardinal seat was in the church of S. Nicola in Carcere in Rome, which he later restored when pope.[128] Nicholas III was also concerned with restoring the dilapidated church of Old St Peters.[129] As mentioned in the Introduction, Nicholas III built a chapel dedicated to St Nicholas in Old St Peters, where he was later buried in a tomb decorated with a fresco representing both St Nicholas and St Francis. The juxtaposition of Sts Nicholas and Francis in this fresco mark an important development within the cult of St Nicholas in the later Middle Ages, and the implications of this iconography will be discussed in the following section.

To summarise, St Nicholas first appeared in Rome in the seventh century, when his name was listed in a *Passionario*. In the following centuries the saint became increasingly more visible within the art and architecture of Rome, and in the tenth century his cult was immortalised within the Roman liturgy. Furthermore, this section has shown that the cult of St Nicholas received substantial papal endorsement; this support meant that, by the thirteenth century, the saint was

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[127] See Gardner (May 1973), p. 294.

[128] For the restoration of the church by Pope Nicholas III, see Palombi (2006), p. 77.

[129] For the 13th-century restorations of Old St Peters, see Herbert L. Kessler, *Old St Peter's and Church Decoration in Medieval Italy* (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'also medioevo, 2002).

represented in the most important buildings of the Holy See, and his cult became associated with some of the most significant events concerning the Latin Church.

PART THREE: HISTORIOGRAPHY

In the later Middle Ages, a further step towards the Latinisation of the cult of St Nicholas coincided with the establishment of the mendicant orders. Connections between St Nicholas and the Franciscan Order started to appear prominently during the pontificate of Nicholas III, as discussed above; further links show that St Nicholas was adopted as a role model for mendicant spirituality. Once again, the cult of St Nicholas was involved in significant ecclesiastical development, which helped to ensure that his cult became further integrated within Latin medieval spirituality.

ST NICHOLAS AND THE FRANCISCANS

The lost tomb of Pope Nicholas III, located within a chapel dedicated to St Nicholas in the church of Old St Peters, Rome, created a strong link between St Nicholas and the Franciscan Order. Nicholas III was the Cardinal Protector of the Franciscan Order before he ascended to the papal throne; he was also an active supporter of the cult of St Nicholas. The fresco which accompanied his tomb and effigy can be considered allegorical of the important roles that both Sts Nicholas and Francis played for the pope. At the time of Nicholas III's death in 1280, the Franciscan Order was well-established, but very young. The pairing of the new saint, St Francis, with a figure from the early centuries of Christianity with a long history in the Latin and Greek churches, is compelling, and this relationship will be explored below. Firstly, a summary of further links between the cults of Sts Nicholas and Francis will show that this connection became established and was not just a reflection of the pope's personal devotion to two different saints.

In the church of S. Francesco at Assisi, a chapel in the Lower Church, located on the northern side of the nave closest to the altar, was dedicated to St Nicholas and decorated with ten scenes from his life and miracles (Fig. 1.12). This chapel was built by Cardinal Napoleone Orsini at the end of the thirteenth century, and decorated with the St Nicholas cycle in honour of the donor's uncle, Pope Nicholas III. A scene from the chapel's dedication is painted on the southern wall above the entrance, and depicts St Nicholas and St Francis presenting to Christ Gian Gaetano Orsini (the brother of Napoleone, who is buried in the chapel), and Cardinal Napoleone respectively. Once again, Sts Francis and Nicholas are visually united, this time within a specifically Franciscan context (Figs 1.12, 1.13). A century later, around the year 1384, the Castellani chapel in the Franciscan church of Sta Croce, Florence, was adorned with a fresco cycle of the life of St Nicholas. The influence exerted by the church at Assisi over later Franciscan monuments is understandable, but the Castellani chapel demonstrates that the St Nicholas cycle at Assisi in particular continued to resonate within the Franciscan Order. Chapter Two will discuss these two cycles in detail, and show that the integration of St Nicholas with other saints in the chapel at Sta Croce served to portray quite specific messages.

The coupling of Sts Nicholas and Francis within prominent monuments in Rome, Assisi and Florence is reflected elsewhere in late-medieval art. For example, in a 1338-44 altarpiece from the cathedral of Ottana in Sardinia, commissioned by the cathedral's Franciscan bishop and attributed to Maestro delle Tempere Francescane, standing images of Sts Nicholas and Francis appear together in the central panel. Sixteen scenes from both their lives and miracles are represented on the external wing panels (Fig. 1.14).[130] In this altarpiece the two saints are paralleled, mirroring one another in their poses and in the arrangement of scenes from the cycles of their lives. These begin with their Births and early miracles on the top-left of each wing and end with their deaths in the bottom-right.[131] Despite their contrasting attire, the saints in the

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[130] For the altarpiece, see Ferdinando Bologna, *I Pittori alla Corte Angioina di Napoli. 1266-1414* (Rome: Ugo Bozzi, 1969), plates VI-18–VI-35.

[131] The St Nicholas cycle illustrates, left to right and top to bottom, *The Birth and Bath Miracle*; *The Three Destitute Maidens*; *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution*; 2 scenes of *Adeodatus*; *The Innkeeper and Two Pickled Boys*, *The Nun and the Oil*; and *The Death of St Nicholas*. For the life of St Francis, the scenes illustrated are, left to right and top to bottom: *The Dream of St Francis*; *St*

central panel display close iconographical similarities. Firstly, they share similar facial features, with long, thin noses with flaring nostrils, and thin, barely-arching eyebrows. In addition, each saint holds a book in his left hand and an attribute in his right: St Francis holds the cross symbolising the stigmata which is visible on his hands, and St Nicholas grasps the hair of Adeodatus, whom he rescued from Saracen captors in one of his most popular legends.[132] This episode is further illustrated in three of the scenes in the St Nicholas cycle on the right-hand wing.

A similar intentional pairing between Sts Nicholas and Francis can be seen in a later predella panel now in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, painted c.1425-27 by Giovanni di Francesco Toscani (Fig. 1.15). The panel represents two miracle scenes: on the left-hand side St Francis receives the stigmata, while on the right St Nicholas saves a ship from a storm at sea. These scenes are not compartmentalised, but merely separated via the motif of a steep cliff linking Mt Verna to the sea. This panel was originally part of a larger triptych painted for the altar of the St Nicholas chapel in the church of Sta Trinita, Florence, which also originally contained a panel with the standing figures of Sts Francis and Nicholas.[133] In this panel, the two saints and their accompanying miracles are placed side by side; in the predella panel, the two miracle scenes are not clearly separated, but merge together, indicating that the two saints are visually connected and to be read as a pair.

MENDICANT SPIRITUALITY

The connections made between St Nicholas and St Francis in the examples above suggest that St Nicholas held a particular appeal for the Franciscan Order. This appeal most likely grew from the saint's reputation as an anonymous benefactor, after he donated his inheritance to a poor father in

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Francis Renounces his Father; *The Dream of Pope Innocent III*; *Pope Honorius III Approves the Franciscan Rule*; *St Francis Appears in a Fiery Chariot to the Brethren at Rivotorto*: *Preaching to the Birds*; damaged scene; *The Death of St Francis*.

[132] See the Introduction to Chapter 2, below, for the iconographical attributes of St Nicholas.

[133] The polyptych is reconstructed in Laura Laureat and Lorenza Mochi Onori, eds, *Gentile da Fabriano and the Other Renaissance*, trans. Richard Sadleir (Milan: Mondaori Electa, 2006), pp. 276-83. The panel featuring Sts Nicholas and Francis, originally located above the predella scene of these saints' miracles on the left-hand wing of the triptych, is now lost.

the legend of the Three Destitute Maidens. In the mid-thirteenth century, the order of the Friars Minor began preaching the virtues of charitable acts and voluntary poverty. These spiritual aims had partly been defined following a century of agricultural and commercial revolutions, as well as political and military stability, which caused population growth and the establishment of new towns and cities throughout Italy. The increasingly urban laity was faced with new moral problems that resulted from wealth and the vices that it could bring. This in turn provoked the need for a new style of preaching that focused upon meeting the needs of the urban population, to give it the ability to work towards its own salvation. The Franciscan friars responded to this need by preaching the virtues of the *vita apostolica* outside the monastery, within the new settings of towns, public squares and urban areas.[134]

The Franciscan preachers thus helped to bring about a fundamental change in western Christianity. The rules they lived by and the ideals they upheld, signified by the figure of St Francis, represent a dramatic development in the role that a saint could play for society as a whole, not just within ecclesiastical circles. Concepts of sanctity and the cult of the saints have been the focus of much scholarly attention in the last fifty years. Authors such as Peter Brown and André Vauchez have published works on the establishment and later development of the cult of the saints, providing paradigms for analysis and suggesting catalysts for significant shifts and advances.[135] More recently, issues of sanctity have been tackled through the examination of individual saints, for example by Katherine Ludwig Jansen in *The Making of the Magdalen*, in order to determine if specific cults fit imposed criteria for acceptance, or if they in fact offer their own.[136] Of particular pertinence for this chapter is the paradigm presented by Vauchez in *La*

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[134] See Daniel R. Lesnick, *Preaching in Medieval Florence. The Social World of Franciscan and Dominican Spirituality* (Athens, London: University of Georgia Press, 1989), pp. 36-39. See also Clifford Hugh Lawrence, *The Friars. The Impact of the Early Mendicant Movement on Western Society* (London: Longman, 1994).

[135] See Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (London: SCM Press, 1981), and Vauchez (1997).

[136] See Jansen (2000).

Sainteté en Occident.[137] Vauchez examines evidence provided by acts of canonisation, and identifies an emerging 'new sanctity' at the end of the twelfth century, in association with the rising mendicant orders. The identification of this conceptual shift has significantly contributed to a greater understanding of the changes that took place within the cult of the saints in the later Middle Ages, and therefore provides an authoritative starting point for a discussion of sanctity and the place of individual saints in relation to the cult of the saints in general. The following discussion will show that the association of St Nicholas with the Franciscan Order, and the popularity of his cult within the new era of mendicant spirituality, resulted in the cult flourishing through a dramatic regeneration.

Vauchez's evidence for the shift within late-medieval spirituality lies within the numerous surviving accounts of papal canonisations. This process is important for understanding collective needs within spirituality, and reveals great insight into the desired requirements of the saints. At the end of the twelfth century, the complicated development of the process of canonisation reached its final stage, and the type of saint subjected to its vigorous demands can be seen as indicative of the dominant, official thought regarding sanctity at this time. During the first centuries of Christianity, no official process of canonisation existed, and the awarding of the title of 'saint' was generally the spontaneous act of a local church. By the end of the twelfth century, the papacy took sole authority in the process of canonisation, which meant that the decision to admit a holy person into the calendar of the saints rested with the pope and a limited number of cardinals, rather than the bishops directly involved with the cult. The papacy's new involvement in the cult of the saints was accompanied, throughout the twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries, by the development of forms of control which led eventually to the official process of canonisation, the earliest recorded of which is dated from 1185.[138]

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[137] Vauchez (1981); for the English translation, see Vauchez (1997).

[138] For the development of the process of canonisation from the early Christian Church to the later Middle Ages, see Vauchez (1997), esp. pp. 1-46.

Vauchez argues that the newly canonised saints of the later Middle Ages generally fitted a profile: they were laymen, whose lives were often recorded during the lifetime of their contemporaries. They were urban and influential, had connections to the mendicant orders in later years, and were active in promoting contemporary religious thought. In the later Middle Ages the laity preferred intercessors closer in time and space, in other words, saints who had lived and performed miracles among them. These saints more fully understood the needs of medieval society, and were considered more effective and precise in their intercessionary duties. Thus, there began a desire for mendicant and lay saints, who had been canonised not long after their death (in the case of St Francis, less than two years), who preached poverty and asceticism, and who had risen from the ranks of the lay people.[139]

Within this trend, the popularity of the cult of St Nicholas offers an interesting alternative. In contrast to the new saints, St Nicholas firmly belonged to the early Christian era. He was a Byzantine bishop who lived in the fourth century, and whose saintly status was not pronounced at any stage by an official bull of canonisation. Surprisingly few bishops feature among the recent saints venerated in the Mediterranean countries in the later Middle Ages, and bishops had stopped being canonised in Italy by the end of the fourteenth century.[140] Bishop saints did have a particular role as the patrons of Italian cities, for example St Donatus was the celebrated patron saint of Arezzo, and at Bologna in the thirteenth century the ancient bishop saint Petronius enjoyed particular veneration.[141] The mendicant orders also promoted the cults of bishop saints, in particular Sts Martin of Tours and Louis of Toulouse. These bishops were important for particular groups and as local patron saints, but St Nicholas was an exception because his appeal was widespread and not limited to a particular town. Furthermore, in single images of the saint in Byzantine art, St Nicholas repeatedly accompanies the Orthodox Church

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[139] Ibid., p. 133.

[140] Ibid., p. 187. See also Donald Weinstein and Rudolph M. Bell, *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000-1700* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 203ff.

[141] For the role of bishop saints as the patrons of towns, see Diana Webb, *Patrons and Defenders. The Saints in the Italian City-States* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1996), esp. the Introduction.

fathers, including John Chrysostom (c.347-407) and Gregory of Nazianzos (c.325-89); the saint interceded with Emperor Constantine on behalf of three wrongly-condemned generals, and he fought against vestiges of pagan worship within his homeland. In other words, St Nicholas did not fit into the dominant trend of western sanctity in the later Middle Ages.

However, the continued popularity of St Nicholas, and his promotion by the Franciscan Order, indicates that within the era of new sanctity as identified by Vauchez, when the spiritual needs of the laity dramatically changed, the cult of St Nicholas was still able to respond to these needs. His cult was obviously acceptable to the Franciscan Order, as not only are Sts Francis and Nicholas represented together within Franciscan settings, but during Francis's lifetime his companion, Brother Egidio, visited the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari while on pilgrimage in 1212.[142] As mentioned above, the act of voluntary charity performed by St Nicholas is the fundamental principle which links St Nicholas to the Franciscan Order. In the text of the first Rule of the Friars Minor, dated 1210-21, the first condition states that 'The friars shall live in obedience and chastity and without earthly good', and that, as according to the Gospel of St Matthew, 'If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.'[143] One of St Nicholas's first acts during his lifetime, chosen for the west wall of the *Sancta Sanctorum* by a pope who had strong connections to the Franciscan Order, was his anonymous donation of his inheritance to the destitute father of three maidens. St Nicholas's rejection of his inheritance and resulting act of charity on behalf of the poor is consistent with Franciscan spirituality. In particular, the act of giving anonymously to the poor was applauded, and was perhaps considered a gesture that was accessible to and could be repeated by the laity. The fact that this legend from the life of St Nicholas became the most frequently represented in

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[142] Fabio Marcelli, 'San Nicola da Sud a Nord', in Bacci, ed. (2006), p. 145. No original source cited.

[143] Halcyon C. Backhouse, ed., *The Writings of St Francis of Assisi* (Reading: Hodder and Stoughton Religious, 1994), p. 21. The Rule of the Friars Minor was written 3 times, in 1209, 1210-21, and 1223. The earliest surviving text of the first Rule dates between 1210 and 1221, and is largely derived from the Gospels. The example quoted above is taken from Matt. 19:21.

Italian art shows that it was this aspect of the saint's personality that was the most desireable in the later Middle Ages.[144]

The virtue of charity had been praised in saints since the early Latin and Orthodox Churches. In the year 387/8 St John Chrysostom, then Archbishop of Constantinople, addressed a homily to the people of Antioch in which he encouraged the rejection of possessions and the assistance of the poor:

> Let us too, then, adorn not our houses, but our souls in preference to the house. For is it not disgraceful to clothe our walls with marble, vainly and to no end, and to neglect Christ going about naked? ... He hath given thee money, not that thou mayest shut it up for thy destruction, but that thou mayest pour it fourth for thy salvation.[145]

The noble acts of which St John Chrysostom speaks can be seen in the legend of the fourth-century saint, Martin of Tours, who became an important Franciscan saint.[146] On encountering a beggar at Amiens one cold night, the saint divided his cloak and gave half to the almost naked man.[147] In Byzantine art, the charity of St Nicholas is celebrated in representations of the saint distributing alms, an action that is recounted in several of the Greek lives.[148] While

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[144] This will be demonstrated in Chapter 2.

[145] This extract is taken from Homily II of the Homilies of St John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, addressed to the people of Antioch, concerning the Statues. See William Richard Wood Stephens, ed., 'Twenty-One Homilies of the Statutes', in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Volume 9: Saint Chrysostom*, eds Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Michigan: Grand Rapids, 1975), pp. 348-51.

[146] Chapels dedicated to St Martin can be found in the church of S. Francesco at Assisi, and the church of Sta Croce, Florence. See the writings of Marcia B. Hall, for example, 'The Tramezzo in Santa Croce, Florence, Reconstructed', *AB* 56, no. 3 (Sept. 1974), pp. 325-41.

[147] This act reflects a legend of St Francis, in which the saint gave away his father's inheritance, symbolised by his removing his cloak before the bishop. For the life of St Francis, see St Bonaventure, *Itinerarium mentis in deum. The Soul's Journey into God; The Tree of Life; The Life of St Francis*, trans. Ewert Cousins (London: SPCK, 1978). For the life of St Martin, see Graesse, ed. (1980), pp. 741-50.

[148] These are the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*, the *Vita per Michaëlem*, the *Encomium Methodii* (Τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Μεθοδίου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὸν ἅγιον Νικολαον τὸν ἐν Μύροις τῆς Λυκίας ἐπίσκοπον διαπρέψαντα) (Anrich [1913-17], vol. 1, pp. 151-82), the *Vita Compilata*, the *Vita per Metaphrasten*, and the *Enconium Neophyti*. See Ševčenko (1983), p. 151.

charitable acts have long been desirable, they received increasing attention in the later Middle Ages. In Italy in particular, asceticism, poverty and chastity, three virtues intended to liberate the body from sin and allow the saint to imitate the humble and suffering Christ, came to play an increasingly crucial role in the decisions regarding canonisations.[149] The enormous popularity of St Francis and the mendicant orders was largely responsible for this.

In opposition to Vauchez's argument, St Nicholas's identity as a bishop may have been advantageous for the advance of his cult in Italy. St Nicholas is nearly always represented as a bishop: in Byzantine art he wears the orthodox *omophorion* and *phelonion*; in Italian art in the later Middle Ages, the mitre and cope.[150] The role of a bishop was the care of souls; those who did not wander from this mission amidst worldly temptations and distractions were considered a model for their successors.[151] As a bishop from the early centuries of Christianity, St Nicholas was hailed as the ideal bishop, as seen for example in the fresco memorial of the Concordat of Worms at the Lateran Palace (Fig. 1.5). For St Nicholas, his role as bishop did not hinder his acceptance by the Franciscan Order; in fact, because being a bishop was one of the most heavily promoted aspects of the saint's cult, this may have attracted mendicant attention. As mentioned, the Franciscans also promoted the cults of other bishop saints. In the cult of St Nicholas, supernatural healing abilities and the powers of intercession and deliverance could be combined with the new, popular notion of charity, be it voluntary, anonymous, or in accordance with the example set by the apostles. In the later Middle Ages, St Nicholas therefore played a moderating role, a vehicle through which the needs of the contemporary laity could be reconciled with prevailing concepts and principles from earlier centuries.

The association between Sts Nicholas and Francis would have probably been beneficial both to the Franciscan Order and the promotion of the cult of St Nicholas. Alliance with an older, long-established saint brought prestige and tradition to the cult of St Francis. At the same time,

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[149] Vauchez (1997), p. 217.

[150] This iconography will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

[151] Weinstein and Bell (1982), p. 158.

this connection ensured that the cult of St Nicholas survived the shift into the era of new sanctity, and the cult could continue to flourish through its continued relevance to its late-medieval audience. The presence of St Nicholas's relics in Italy at the end of the eleventh century also created the impression that St Nicholas had changed from being a distant saint from a far-away land, to being local, and therefore more accessible, a fact which no doubt helped to ensure the saint's continued intercessionary powers. At the same time, the fact that St Nicholas was promoted as an ideal bishop saint, even in the thirteenth century, shows that Vauchez's paradigm of new sanctity is not universal; St Nicholas himself provides an alternative. Within the cult of St Nicholas, the new developments brought about by the Franciscan Order could be reconciled with traditional concepts and beliefs that had existed from the early years of Christianity. With this in mind, it is perhaps easier to understand the widespread appeal of St Nicholas in the later Middle Ages, and why emperors, kings and popes continued to promote his cult throughout these centuries and beyond.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown how, over the course of many centuries, the cult of St Nicholas gradually became integrated into the Latin Church. In the seventh century, St Nicholas first entered the western liturgy. In the following centuries Latin lives of the saint were written, at first translated from the Greek but later adapted through innovation, and in the thirteenth century Voragine's *Legenda Aurea* describes a saint that is distinct from his Greek original. In Rome, the cult of St Nicholas became integrated at the heart of the Roman Church, and through papal patronage his cult was promoted through visual means in very prominent locations. This attention was later echoed in the saint's association with the Franciscan Order. In the thirteenth century the role of St Nicholas as a champion of papal victory, established by Urban II in the eleventh century, was replaced by a more practical task, giving a further dimension to the cult and bringing it to a wider audience. The role of St Nicholas kept evolving: as different aspects were demanded from the saints, the cult of St Nicholas adapted, and in this way it could remain relevant.

The striking parallel between St Nicholas and a key element of Franciscan spirituality is unmistakable, and shows that the cult of St Nicholas could respond to the needs of the new, urban laity of the later Middle Ages, and in this way the cult could remain pertinent. This chapter has shown that the cult of an old saint could effectively be updated to remain relevant and responsive within a new spiritual era. The assessment of the role of older saints in the era of new sanctity is relevant to many saints, not just St Nicholas, but is only now being looked at by scholars.[152] Ultimately, the regeneration of the cult of St Nicholas in the later Middle Ages meant that it had become fully Latinised. In turn, this Latinisation allowed many different groups throughout Italy to access the saint and adopt him as a patron. This Latinisation became visually manifest within the saint's Italian iconography. The following chapter discuss's significant developments within the iconography of St Nicholas in Italian art, and shows the close relationships that existed between the saint's iconography and the written lives discussed in this chapter. Because a saint's image was a more powerful means of communicating the story of their life, the Latinisation evident within the iconography of St Nicholas indicates that the saint's new Latin identity was accessible to a large proportion of medieval Italian society.

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[152] See, for example, the examination of the cult of Mary Magdalene by Katherine Ludwig Jansen, and the recent thesis by Jessica Richardson, which looks at the cult of St Leonard of Noblat in Italy. Jansen (2000); Richardson (2007).

CHAPTER TWO: THE ICONOGRAPHY OF ST NICHOLAS IN ITALY

INTRODUCTION

On an altarpiece attributed to Margarito of Arezzo, dated c.1260, two episodes from the life of St Nicholas are represented in the lower tier, either side of the central Virgin and Child (Fig. 2.1).[153] In the left-hand scene, which depicts *The Nun and the Oil*, St Nicholas appears in the top-right hand corner, hovering next to the sail of the boat and warning the sailors of the nun's treachery. In the second scene, representing an episode from the miracle of the *Praxis de Stratelates*, St Nicholas stands to the left of a group of figures, seizing the sword that is about to behead the three innocent generals. In both scenes St Nicholas wears a long, red cope and a pointed mitre, the clothing of a western bishop.

This mid-thirteenth-century altarpiece reflects an important iconographical shift in the representation of the figure of St Nicholas in Italian art, present both in scenes from the saint's life and in single-figure representations. In earlier centuries, St Nicholas had traditionally been depicted wearing the garb of an orthodox bishop. In an eleventh-century fresco from the crypt of S. Nicola dei Greci at Matera, eastern Basilicata, St Nicholas stands in strict Byzantine frontality with his right hand raised in blessing and his left hand holding a closed book (Fig. 2.2). His white hair recedes to reveal a large forehead and the saint wears the *omophorion*,[154] draped over a red, embroidered *phelonion*,[155] which in turn is worn over a dark blue tunic, the *sticharion*.[156] This

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[153] The *Virgin and Child Enthroned*, with scenes of the Nativity and the lives of the Saints, now at the National Gallery in London, is signed 'margarit de aritio me fecit'. See Christopher Baker and Tom Henry, eds, *The National Gallery Complete Illustrated Catalogue* (London: National Gallery, 1995), p. 410.

[154] The *omophorion* (ώμοφόριον) is an embroidered band worn by an orthodox bishop when vested for the Holy Liturgy, and corresponds to the Latin pallium; in the S. Nicola dei Greci fresco the *omophorion* has 3 large blue crosses and is worn draped across the shoulders and down the chest. See Frances Morris, 'A recent Accession of Ecclesiastical Vestments', *MMAB* 10, no. 3 (Mar. 1915), pp. 47-49, esp. p. 49.

[155] The *phelonion* (φαιλόνιον) corresponds to the Latin chasuble, i.e. a large circular vestment with no openings, gathered at the elbows to free the arms. In this fresco, St Nicholas wears a red, embroidered *phelonion*. See Rudolf M. Riefstahl, 'Greek Orthodox Vestments and Ecclesiastical Fabrics', *AB* 14, no. 4 (Dec. 1932), pp. 359-73, esp. p. 363. The orthodox rite does not observe a sequence of liturgical colours,

image of St Nicholas follows Byzantine tradition, as seen in a contemporary image of the saint from an icon at the monastery of St Catherine at Mt Sinai (Fig. 2.3).[157]

The shift in the representation of St Nicholas from an orthodox to a Latin bishop, of which the Margarito of Arezzo altarpiece is one of the earliest surviving examples, is a significant development in the cult of St Nicholas and reflects the Latinisation of the cult described in Chapter One.[158] While the shift occurs in both narrative scenes and single-figure representations of the saint, it is in the latter category that the transformation is most perceptible. The group of surviving single-figure representations of St Nicholas in Italian art is extensive, and precise numbers cannot be given. During research for this chapter, I consulted iconographical surveys and indices,[159] yet during a research trip to Puglia I observed additional single-figure images of St Nicholas that have never before been published (Figs 2.4-2.8).[160] This chapter can therefore

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therefore the *phenolion* may be any colour. See Adrian Fortescue, *The Orthodox Eastern Church* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1969, first published 1907), p. 405.

[156] The *sticharion* (στιχάριον) is a long tunic with sleeves, worn over the cassock by a deacon or bishop when performing the Holy Liturgy. A useful glossary for orthodox liturgical vestments can be found in Evans and William, eds (1997), pp. 560-62. See also Fortescue (1969), pp. 403-09; Cyril Mango and Ernest J.W. Hawkins, ‘The Mosaics of St Sophia at Istanbul. The Church Fathers in the North Tympanum’, *DOP* 26 (1972), pp. 1-41, esp. p. 10.

[157] For the establishment and development of the image of St Nicholas in Byzantine art, see Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, ‘San Nicola nell’arte bizantina’, in Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 61-70. See also Bacci (2009), pp. 78-98; see esp. pp. 85-88, which discusses the saint’s orthodox clothing, and pp. 88-93, which looks at the saint’s hair and beard.

[158] The Margarito of Arezzo altarpiece is the earliest surviving example I have found of St Nicholas appearing as a fully western bishop saint. This shift may have also occurred in the c.1200 fresco from the church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo at Spoleto, discussed in Chapter 1; however, in this representation the saint’s head had been damaged, and it is not possible to see whether he wears a mitre. The shift can also be witnessed within representations of St Nicholas outside of Italy, for example on a French Crusader panel from the late-13th century, now at the Monastery of St Catherine at Mt Sinai. In this panel, St Nicholas is represented as a Latin bishop saint with a mitre, pallium and crosier. See Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 272, 286-87.

[159] I consulted, in particular, the 4-volume iconographical survey by Kaftal (1952-85); Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1949); Giuseppe Lucatuorto and Mauro Spagnoletti, eds, *San Nicola di Mira nelle immagini* (Puglia: Schena, 1984); Bacci, ed. (2006). I also consulted the PICA at the University of Utrecht.

[160] For example, in the church of Sta Lucia alle Malve at Matera, St Nicholas is represented amongst the 14th-century frescoes as a full-length standing saint on the right-hand wall of the nave alongside a scene of the *Deposition* and the *Coronation of the Virgin*. Information regarding this rock-cut church is provided on-site by the *Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici e per il Paesaggio per la Basilicata.* In the rock-cut church of the settlement of Lama d’Antiqua, near Fasano, St Nicholas is represented as a full-length, standing saint next to St Philip on the right-hand wall of the nave. The date of the frescoes is unknown. At Massafra, near Taranto, St Nicholas is represented twice in the rock-cut church of St Anthony Abbot, on the interior west wall near the entrance (14th century), and on

discuss only a small, representative portion of the corpus.[161] The shift from orthodox to Latin in the garb of St Nicholas is one of several developments in the iconography of the saint in Italian art. The later sections of this chapter will explore several others, concentrating on cycles and narrative scenes, and will reveal how the iconography of the life of St Nicholas followed similar patterns of assimilation into Italian traditions.[162] Furthermore, the various aspects of the cult of St Nicholas in Italy did not develop independently, but rather concurrently: as the hagiography of St Nicholas inspired his iconography, in a similar way the images of the life of St Nicholas consolidated the new additions to the saint's written lives and helped establish a hierarchy of illustrated scenes.

Representations of St Nicholas as an orthodox bishop were concentrated in areas of Italy with strong connections to the East, in particular the region of Puglia where the earliest surviving of these images are most prolific (Fig. 2.2).[163] As at Rome, images of St Nicholas survive in Puglia that predate the translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Italy. Elsewhere, the orthodox iconography of St Nicholas can be seen in, for example, the mosaics of the Norman churches of Sicily (Fig. 2.9),[164] the lower church of S. Clemente at Rome (Fig. 1.3),[165] and the mosaics of S.

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the small transept wall facing west adjacent to the south wall next to the main altar (11th century). These dates were given on site by my tour guide. At Monte S. Angelo, I believe that a figure of St Nicholas is represented on the wall of the Angevin staircase, added to the complex in the 13th century (see p. 151, fn. 103, below).

[161] In total, I have identified 285 surviving representations of St Nicholas as a single figure, either as an individual or accompanied by other saints, in any media.

[162] For developments in the iconography of St Nicholas outside Italy, see Ševčenko (1983), for Greece and Serbia, and Bacci (2009), ch. 4, for the Caucusus and the Mediterranean region including northern Africa.

[163] This observation is made by Bacci (2009), pp. 148-49, but with no further discussion. Of my corpus of 285 images of St Nicholas as a single, standing figure, 66 represent the saint as an orthodox bishop. The majority of these, 43 out of 66, are located in Puglia, 9 are located in Venice, 5 in southern Italy, 4 in Rome, 2 in central and north-west Italy, and 1 in north-east Italy. The images in Puglia are mostly preserved in rock-cut churches, many of which have been recently restored. In the region of Puglia the orthodox rite was practiced until after the Middle Ages, and Greek remained the main language in many locations. This will be discussed further in Chapter 3, pp. 129-30.

[164] In the Norman churches of Sicily, St Nicholas is represented in mosaic on the north wall of the apse of the Capella Palatina at Palermo (c.1142), in the south presbytery mosaics of the cathedral of Cefalù (1148), and in the mosaics of the lower tier of the apse of the cathedral of Monreale (1187). For these churches, see Wolfgang Krönig, ed., *Monumenti della Sicilia Normanna* (Palermo: S.F. Flaccovio, 1979, 2nd edition), esp. pp. 37-40, 44-55, 65-69.

[165] See pp. 36-37, above.

Marco at Venice (Figs 4.3-4.6).[166] Although most profuse in the centuries before and immediately following the 1087 translation, the iconography of St Nicholas as an orthodox bishop was still present in Puglia in the later Middle Ages.[167] The fresco at S. Nicola dei Greci therefore represents an image of a saint who was known in both the East and West, who was frequently depicted and thus familiar, and whose clothing signifies the role he adopted during his lifetime, that of the orthodox bishop of Myra. However, the Margarito of Arezzo altarpiece indicates that in the centuries following the translation, the iconography of the figure of St Nicholas underwent a significant east-west transition. The image of the saint shed the orthodox garments and became transformed into that of a bishop of the Latin Church, reflecting the new Italian location of the saint's relics.

The transformation from orthodox to Latin bishop occurred gradually and by no means collectively or completely. An interesting corpus of 'hybrid' images dating from the twelfth century, in which St Nicholas wears a combination of both orthodox and Latin garments, suggests a desire to reconcile the eastern saint with his new resting place, while acknowledging the saint's orthodox origins. In the mid-twelfth-century plaque depicting St Nicholas crowning King Roger II of Sicily, originally located above the high altar in the church of S. Nicola at Bari, St Nicholas wears the Byzantine *omophorion*, but holds a crosier in his left hand (Fig. 2.10).[168] The introduction of the crosier on the enamel plaque may be a means of creating compositional balance, as Roger holds a staff in his right hand. Its presence could also reflect the complex self-

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[166] The representations of St Nicholas in the church of S. Marco at Venice will be discussed in Chapter 4; see pp. 200-10, below.

[167] For example, in the church of S. Stefano at Soleto, St Nicholas is represented as an orthodox bishop on the right-hand wall of the nave, near the entrance. These frescoes are dated to the 13th or 14th century. See Michel Berger and André Jacob, eds, *La chiesa di S. Stefano a Soleto: tradizioni bizantine e cultura tardogotica* (Lecce: Argo, 2007); Maria Stella Calò Mariani, 'L'immagine e il culto di san Nicola a Bari e in Puglia', in Bacci, ed. (2006), p. 113. See also p. 142, below.

[168] The orthodox rite did include a staff (δικανίκιον) for the bishop, but this was characteristically shorter than the Latin equivalent, and terminated in two curved branches ornamented with serpents' heads either side of a cross, and not the scroll of the Latin crosier, as held by St Nicholas in the plaque. See Fortescue (1969), p. 407. For the enamel plaque, probably produced in Sicily around the year 1132, see Bacci, ed. (2006), p. 259.

image that the Norman king created.[169] Either way, the enamel plaque displays a new element in the iconography of St Nicholas,[170] which is picked up again in later hybrid images, for example in the late-twelfth- or early-thirteenth-century fresco from the church of Sta Maria Maggiore at Monte S. Angelo (Fig. 2.11).[171] In this image, St Nicholas also wears the Latin pointed mitre, as seen in the Margarito of Arezzo altarpiece. The 'hybrid' images in succeeding centuries suggest that the iconography of the figure of St Nicholas underwent a long process of change and development, in which the saint's image shifted away from its eastern origins, resulting in a new visual identity for the saint and a new understanding of the role he was perceived to have played. Once transformed into a western bishop, images of St Nicholas as a single figure were no longer concentrated in the regions of Italy with strong eastern connections, but were located across the peninsular, particularly in central Italy (Fig. 2.12).[172]

Alongside the gradual shift in St Nicholas's episcopal garments, the single-figure representations of the saint in Italian art display a further significant development: the Latin bishop saint's acquisition of an attribute, unrelated to his role as bishop. In a 1353 altarpiece by Andrea Orcagna, probably commissioned for the chapel of St Nicholas in the church of SS. Annunziata, Florence,[173] St Nicholas wears the mitre and mantle of a western bishop, but instead of a crosier the saint prominently holds in his right hand three golden spheres (Fig. 2.13). In the Orcagna altarpiece, which is the earliest surviving example I have identified of the saint with this

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[169] Roger II modelled the administration of his monarchy upon the court of the Byzantine emperors; the enamel plaque representation of his crowning by St Nicholas, a well-known eastern saint, ensured his legitimacy in the orthodox world, while the saint's role as the patron of the Norman monarchy, and the Latin implications of the saint's crosier, also acknowledged the king's need for acceptance in the Latin West. For King Roger II of Sicily, the kingdom that he created mirroring the Byzantine court, and the issues this caused in the Latin West, see William Tronzo, *The Cultures of His Kingdom. Roger II and the Cappella Palatina in Palermo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

[170] I have not identified any image, in either Byzantine or Italian art, in which St Nicholas holds the orthodox staff, and the enamel plaque is the earliest surviving example of the saint holding any kind of staff at all.

[171] Maria Stella Calò Mariani, 'L'arte Medievale e il Gargano', in *La montagna sacra. San Michele, Monte Sant'Angelo e il Gargano*, ed. Giovanni Battista Bronzini (Galatina: Congedo, 1992), pp. 44-56.

[172] Of the 285 images of St Nicholas as a single figure that I have identified, 137 of these depict the saint as a western bishop. The majority of these examples survive on altarpieces from central Italy (74 out of 137). Others are located across Italy in various media, including at Treviso, Pesaro, Ravello and Calabria.

[173] See Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 330-31.

attribute, the golden spheres do not rest comfortably in the saint's hand, but are suspended upon his bright red vestment. This avoidance of touch is reminiscent of the saint's posture in earlier, orthodox images, where he holds a book in his left hand that is covered by his *phelonion*.[174] In later representations of the saint with this attribute, the spheres are either held in the saint's hand, covered or uncovered,[175] are balanced upon a book,[176] or rest at his feet (Figs 2.14-2.16).[177] At times St Nicholas is heavily laden, holding the spheres, the book, and the crosier (Fig. 2.17).[178] By the fifteenth century, the three golden spheres had become an established part of the saint's iconography, and he was rarely represented without them (Fig. 2.18).[179]

The attribute of the three golden spheres is taken from an established narrative aspect of the life of St Nicholas. In scenes of the *Three Destitute Maidens*, St Nicholas is depicted in the act of donating his inheritance, in the form of three quantities of gold, to the father of three girls destined for prostitution.[180] The golden spheres held by St Nicholas in the Orcagna altarpiece represent the gold he donated, and therefore the saint's act of anonymous charity. The gold thrown by St Nicholas in representations of this scene initially took the form of bags or bars of

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[174] As, for example, in the 1055-75 *arcosolium* fresco of St Nicholas in the crypt of Ste Marina e Cristina at Carpignano Salentino, Puglia. See Castelfranchi (1991), pp. 58-70. This fresco will be discussed in Chapter 3, p. 133, below.

[175] In an altarpiece by Bicci da Lorenzo (1373-1452), now in the Museo Bandini, Florence, St Nicholas holds the golden spheres in his bare left hand. See Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984), pp. 102-03.

[176] The spheres rest upon the saint's book in the 1450-51 panel of St Nicholas by Antonio Vivarini, now in the Seminario Patriarcale, Venice. This altarpiece is discussed in Chapter 4, pp. 244-45, below. See Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 336-37.

[177] In Raphael's Ansidei Madonna altarpiece (dated 1505), commissioned by Bernardino Ansidei for his family chapel dedicated to St Nicholas in the church of S. Fiorenzo at Perugia, and now in the National Gallery in London, St Nicholas stands reading a book and holding a staff, while the 3 golden spheres lay beside his feet. Although later than the period in discussion, this image shows that the attribute of St Nicholas was not fixed and could be later adapted for compositional, or other, purposes. See Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984), p. 117.

[178] See, for example, the c.1395 altarpiece by Agnolo Gaddi, now in Munich, in which St Nicholas appears on a wing panel holding all 3. See Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), esp. pp. 42-43, 83-84.

[179] The golden spheres are absent in the representation of the saint in the Frari *Pesaro* triptych, painted in 1488 by Giovanni Bellini for the convent of Sta Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice. Here, St Nicholas holds a book flat almost in anticipation of balancing the spheres, in the same manner as in the Vivarini image at the Seminario Patriarcale, but there are no spheres depicted. The Frari triptych will be discussed in Chapter 4, pp. 246-47. See Peter Humfrey, *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 348.

[180] As will be discussed below, this particular episode from the life of St Nicholas was the most frequently represented in Italian art. See p. 82, fn. 247, below.

gold (Figs 2.19, 2.20),[181] but by the mid-fourteenth century had changed to spheres (Fig. 2.21).[182] The attribute held by St Nicholas in the Orcagna panel therefore represents both an act of charity on behalf of the saint, and a recent development in the saint's iconography in both single figures and narrative scenes. Because of losses within the corpus of St Nicholas representations, it cannot be known whether St Nicholas's inheritance was first represented as three golden spheres in the narrative scenes or the single figure images; either the single figures lift the golden spheres from the narrative scene, or representations of *The Three Destitute Maidens* were updated to reflect the attribute St Nicholas began to acquire in the fourteenth century. In either case, the three golden spheres were a specifically iconographical development, because in the saint's written lives, in particular the *Legenda Aurea*, St Nicholas does not throw golden spheres through the maidens' window but a quantity of gold wrapped in cloth.[183]

In other images from the later Middle Ages, St Nicholas can be seen with alternative attributes. In the 1338-43 altarpiece at Ottana cathedral the saint's right hand rests above the head of a small boy (Fig. 2.22).[184] The child is Adeodatus, who St Nicholas rescued from Saracen captors. The saint can be seen grabbing a handful of Adeodatus's hair in order to carry the child to safety in a fifteenth-century fresco in the cathedral of Atri, in the Abruzzi (Fig. 2.23).[185] Alternatively, at the feet of St Nicholas in the fifteenth-century apse frescoes of the church of S. Donato at Sesto Calende, near Varese in Lombardy, appears a small wooden barrel in which three

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[181] For example, on the *vita* panel of St Nicholas painted in the 13th century for the church of Sta Margherita, Bisceglie, St Nicholas throws a bag of gold in the scene of *The Three Destitute Maidens*. In the same scene on the predella of an altarpiece painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti c.1327-32, for the church of S. Procolo, Florence, and now in the Uffizi Galleries, St Nicholas is represented throwing a bar of gold through the window. Both panels will be discussed later in this chapter, see pp. 77-91, 114-17, below.

[182] See, for example, the altarpiece predella panel attributed to Paolo Veneziano, painted c.1340-45, formerly in the Contini Bonacossi collection in Florence and now in the Uffizi. This panel will be discussed in Chapter 4, see pp. 214-15, below.

[183] 'Quod ubi sanctus comperit, scelus abhorruit et massam auri panno involutam in domum ejus per fenestram nocte clam jecit et clam recessit', Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 23.

[184] The altarpiece, showing the lives of Sts Nicholas and Francis, was painted by Maestro delle tempere Francescane, c.1338-43, for the cathedral of Ottana. See p. 52, fn. 131, above.

[185] For the fresco, attributed to the school of the Abruzzi in the 15th century, see George Kaftal, *Iconography of the Saints in Central and South Italian Schools of Painting* (Florence: Sansoni, 1965), p. 811. Kaftal does not indicate the location of the fresco in the church.

naked, standing youths look up towards the saint (Fig. 2.24).[186] These youths are the three children St Nicholas resuscitated after they were killed and pickled by an innkeeper during a famine.[187] The three different attributes of the golden spheres, Adeodatus, and the Three Pickled Boys indicate that the iconography of St Nicholas in Italian art underwent a search for a suitable characteristic of the saint to be emphasised above all others.[188] This was perhaps to distinguish St Nicholas from the multitude of late-medieval Italian city patron saints, many of whom were bishops.[189] The motif of the three golden spheres was by far the most successful attribution.

St Nicholas's attributes, adapted from narrative scenes, were a western innovation and have never appeared in orthodox representations of the saint. The corpus of single-figure images of St Nicholas in Italian art therefore reveals a gradual transition from eastern to western iconography, and also a specifically new, Latin development, which occurred outside the orthodox milieu. This new Latin feature represents both the assimilation of St Nicholas's iconography into western culture and an adaptability on behalf of the iconography, both of which can also be witnessed within the complex corpus of narrative scenes and cycles of the life of St Nicholas, which will form the focus of this chapter.

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[186] See Gemma Guglielmetti Villa, *Affreschi del '400 nel territorio di Varese* (Milan: Bramante, 1964), page numbers not included.

[187] See p. 28, fn. 26, 27, above. This miracle, a later addition to the Latin hagiography of St Nicholas, tells how during a famine in the diocese of Myra an innkeeper had run short of meet to serve his guests, so he abducted 3 boys and pickled them in a salting tub. St Nicholas was passing through his diocese when he heard of the boys' disappearance. On discovering their salted remains at the inn, St Nicholas resuscitated the boys, whose remains reattached and the boys stood up alive in the tub.

[188] A similar search can be seen in the art relating to the cult of St Nicholas in France and Germany. See Meisen (1931), pp. 293-306.

[189] These patron saints were charged with the city's heavenly protection, with defending its independence, and with conferring its legitimacy. For example, the bishop saint Zeno was the patron saint of Verona, whose role as the protector and defender of the commune is attested by an inscription above the west portal of the Romanesque church of S. Zeno, below a sculpted representation of the saint accompanied by cavalry and soldiers: 'The bishop with sincere heart grants to his people a standard worthy of defence.' See Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God: The Religion of the Italian Communes, 1125-1325* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), pp. 115-16. See also Webb (1996). Other bishop saints had distinctive attributes, for example St Blaise, the 3rd-century Bishop of Sebaste in Cappadocia, who was often depicted with an iron comb representing his torture by a Roman prefect with iron spikes: see George Kaftal, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence: Sansoni, 1952), p. 206.

The first chapter of this thesis has described how the medieval cult of St Nicholas gradually became integrated into Latin religious life, starting with the saint's seventh-century appearance within the Roman liturgy. The representations of St Nicholas as a single figure in Italian art discussed above, in particular the 'hybrid' figures and those in which the saint holds an attribute, indicate that a similar assimilation occurred within the saint's iconography. This development was not limited to the saint's clothing or attribute; this chapter will illustrate how Italian narrative representations of the life of St Nicholas also underwent a gradual, complex transition from eastern iconography to western, were responsive to western innovation, and ultimately came to reflect new Italian concerns.

The wide appeal of St Nicholas in Italy stimulated the production of an extraordinarily extensive corpus of art associated with his cult, particularly in the centuries following the 1087 translation. Within this corpus, the body of works representing narrative scenes is smaller than those depicting single figures, but is nevertheless considerable.[190] Italian images of the life and miracles of St Nicholas are found in widely diverse contexts, from the public and monumental settings of church walls, altarpiece predellas and bronze doors, to the more intimate sphere of cameos, manuscript illuminations and metalwork reliquaries. The story of St Nicholas had, in the later Middle Ages, attracted the attention of disparate patrons, and some of the greatest painters of the time. Perhaps because of the volume of material displaying the image of St Nicholas in Italy, a coherent iconographical analysis of the corpus, either partial or complete, is notably absent from the literature on the saint's cult. Studies of the cult of St Nicholas invariably include sections on the representation of the saint in Italy.[191] However, these are illustrative rather than discursive or analytical, and treat the material as the continuation and development of the orthodox

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[190] I have identified 31 cycles of the life of St Nicholas, and 33 separate individual narrative scenes. The corpus of single figure representations of the saint numbers 285. These figures are not exhaustive, but represent the quantity of examples I have encountered, and in some cases identified, during research for this thesis.

[191] For example, see Giorgio Otranto, 'San Nicola nella tradizione barese', in Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 97-106; Mariani (2006), pp. 107-16; Clare (1985), pp. 51-101; Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984).

iconographical tradition but without elaborating on the important changes that resulted in a distinctively Latin visual tradition for the saint.

The discussions in this chapter can be considered analogous to the work of Nancy Patterson Ševčenko who, in 1983, published an indispensable volume entitled *The Life of St Nicholas in Byzantine Art*.[192] This work has greatly advanced our understanding of the extensive corpus of art associated with the cult of St Nicholas in the East. Ševčenko's study focuses upon the eastern origins and development of the iconographical details of the life of St Nicholas, in particular the composition of the scenes, the figures included, and their gestures. The study discusses at length the relationship between twenty-five of the surviving Greek texts of the life of St Nicholas and fifty-six extant Byzantine St Nicholas cycles.[193] The study concludes that the Greek lives played only a minor role in the formation of St Nicholas's iconography in Byzantine art, and that painters relied to a great degree upon existing compositional formulae.[194] This chapter will attempt a similar task for the Italian cycles of St Nicholas, and will also examine the impact of more recent Latin texts, in particular the *Legenda Aurea*, with the aim of identifying the possible sources for the episodes depicted.[195] Although Ševčenko's volume deals only with Byzantine images of St Nicholas, it nevertheless provides valuable analyses of both his cult and iconography in the place where the cult originated and the saint's visual representation first became established. This chapter will develop Ševčenko's study not only by extending her methods to the Italian corpus, but by also considering representations of the saint as a single figure, as these display iconographical transformations that are reflected within the cycles of the life and miracles of the saint.

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[192] See Ševčenko (1983).

[193] Ševčenko identifies the 25 most influential Greek texts for the iconography of the St Nicholas cycles in Byzantine art, taken from Anrich (1913-17), and Halkin (1957). See p. 24, fn. 2, above.

[194] Ševčenko identifies biblical sources for the choice and composition of figures in particular scenes, for example the Birth of St Nicholas borrows from the well-established iconography of the Birth of the Virgin. See Ševčenko (1983), pp. 68, 155.

[195] The versions of the *Legenda Aurea* used in this chapter are: Graesse, ed. (1890) for the Latin, and Ryan (1993) for English translations.

The phenomenal volume of surviving material pertaining to the cult of St Nicholas in Italy constitutes an incoherent and extensive corpus that is too great to be presented in full in this thesis. Consequently, the following iconographical study will concentrate on identifying broad patterns of development within the saint's iconography throughout Italy, with the aim of demonstrating how the iconography became integrated within Latin visual culture. This chapter will discuss monumental painted images of St Nicholas produced in Italy,[196] in particular fresco and altarpiece representations, as this category constitutes the largest and most accessible proportion of representations of the life of the saint in Italian art. These images would also have been visible to the largest audiences and would have been the most influential in perpetuating particular iconographic developments. This chapter will, however, omit monumental sculpture; while fulfilling the above criteria, the surviving sculpture associated with the cult of St Nicholas in Italy is not as consistently documented. Monumental painted images have a strong historiography from which to commence a study, which will be discussed below; the same does not apply to sculpture, and to produce a meaningful analysis of this material is beyond the scope of this thesis.

As will become clear, geographical locations play an important role in the development of the iconography of St Nicholas in Italian art. Two important groups of material are mostly omitted from the following discussion, those produced in Puglia and Venice. These two groups are complex anomalies, presenting exceptions to the general east-west transition of the saint's iconography, and consequently will be discussed in the case studies of Chapters Three and Four. This chapter will not attempt to encompass the full remaining corpus of monumental painted images of St Nicholas in Italian art, but will identify the general patterns which can be discerned. The case studies of the cult of St Nicholas in Puglia and Venice will then measure the saint's iconographical development in these regions against the general trends discussed in this chapter.

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[196] As opposed to art works produced elsewhere, but displayed in an Italian context, for example the well-known icon of St Nicholas sent from Serbia by King Uroš III Dečanski, now in the crypt of the church of S. Nicola, Bari. See Mariani (2006), pp. 111-12.

The corpus of monumental painted art relating to the cult of St Nicholas which has endured from the Middle Ages has inevitably suffered great losses.[197] Any study of Italian painting will acknowledge that more evidence survives from the fourteenth century onwards, and the St Nicholas corpus reflects this.[198] The surviving material can be grouped into clusters, which in turn present opportunities for detailed case studies, and which allow the material to be meaningfully analysed. The corpus of monumental art will therefore be presented in these groups, which take advantage of the opportunity for a more straightforward understanding of the iconographical developments within the corpus.

The first group consists of thirteenth-century *vita* panels, which represent the most extensive St Nicholas cycles. This section will discuss a panel from Puglia, as this is the earliest *vita* panel which survives, and it contains the greatest number of scenes of any of the Italian cycles. This panel therefore gives the most accurate impression of how the life of St Nicholas was understood by an Italian audience at an early stage in the cult's development. This panel shows that early Italian St Nicholas cycles were greatly influenced by Byzantine prototypes, but that western innovations can already be discerned. The second case study will look at the role of Franciscan patronage in the iconography of St Nicholas. This category contains one of the most extensive surviving St Nicholas fresco cycles in Italy, in the church of S. Francesco at Assisi. The Franciscan cycles carry the iconography presented by the *vita* panels forward into the fourteenth century, but with significant developments related to mendicant spirituality, showing that the St Nicholas cycle could be adapted for specific purposes. Chapter One has discussed the importance of the mendicant order for the Latinisation of the cult of St Nicholas; artistic patronage on behalf of the order achieved a similar result for the saint's iconography.

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[197] According to Edward Garrison, up to 99 percent of Italian Romanesque panel paintings produced in Italy in the 13th and 14th centuries are thought to have perished. See Edward B. Garrison, *Early Italian Painting: Selected Studies* (London: Pindar Press, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 12-13.

[198] See, for example, Humfrey (1993). The overwhelming majority of altarpiece panels produced in Tuscany and central Italy survive from the 14th and 15th centuries.

In the third group, a selection of fresco cycles from north-east Italy show that the Franciscan developments became an established part of the saint's iconography, but that further adaptability still occurred. Finally, the fourth case study presents a mature, 'Italian' group of scenes, found on fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Tuscan predella panels, the largest group of narrative scenes in the corpus, which shows the iconography of St Nicholas at its fully Latinised stage. The four case studies will also address the broader question of whether there were consistent choices regarding which episodes from the life of St Nicholas were represented, and what specific choices signify. Within each category a few pertinent examples will be chosen for close examination. Where appropriate these will be compared with contemporary examples from the extensive Byzantine corpus of St Nicholas images, in order to elucidate the developments which occurred specifically within the Italian works.

Dividing the corpus in this manner sets this study apart from other iconographical reviews. Such surveys as those completed in the last century by George Kaftal and Edward B. Garrison, as well as the Princeton Index of Christian Art, have contributed significantly to our recognition and understanding of the visual representation of the saints. Kaftal's work *The Iconography of the Saints*, and Garrison's *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*, provide indispensable reference points for a saint's image, as well as the possibility to observe, for example, notable developments and exceptions.[199] Both authors, as well as the Princeton Index, represent a particular encyclopaedic approach, and provide excellent templates for organising and presenting the iconographical features of the saints through categorisation. While formalist and perhaps even crude, this method does provide a very useful resource for studying the iconography of the saints: in Kaftal's volumes, the most common representations of St Nicholas are immediately apparent, and in all cases the viewer is able to make sense of the material presented, albeit in the ways intended by the compiler. Nevertheless, these works have limitations: Kaftal includes only painted images, and Garrison only those from the Romanesque period; the

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[199] See Kaftal (1952-85); Garrison (1949).

Princeton Index currently has issues of practicality and ease of use, and only includes works produced up until the year 1400.[200] While the study in this chapter is also limited, it goes a step further by extracting information from the selected corpus and providing analyses of the main issues identified.

THE CORPUS

The category of cycles and narrative scenes from the life of St Nicholas constitutes less than one third of the corpus of Italian monumental painted images representing the saint in fresco and on altarpieces. The remainder depict St Nicholas as a single-figure.[201] I have identified thirty-one cycles containing at least two narrative scenes. Of the cycles, sixteen are found in fresco, and are located throughout Italy at Arezzo,[202] Assisi,[203] Bolzano,[204] Florence,[205] Montefiascone,[206] Novalesa,[207] Pistoia,[208] Ravello,[209] Udine,[210] Verona,[211] Vittorio Veneto,[212] and Puglia, where five

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[200] The PICA contains information of over 500,000 images stored on card files, of which 100,000 are illustrated. Since 1991, new additions to the index have been added to an electronic database. The Index is available for consultation at the following institutions: the University of Princeton, New Jersey; Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, Washington DC; the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles; the Vatican Library, and the Library of Arts and Humanities at the University of Utrecht, Netherlands.

[201] Of the corpus of 285 images of St Nicholas as a single figure mentioned above (see p. 64, fn. 163), 260 of these are represented in fresco and on altarpieces.

[202] Church of S. Domenico, probably painted by Parri Spinelli (c.1387-1453), early-15th century. I am grateful to Donal Cooper for bringing this altarpiece to my attention.

[203] Chapel of St Nicholas, Lower Church of S. Francesco, 1297-1311. This cycle will be discussed below.

[204] Church of S. Domenico. Bolognese-Riminese school, 14th century. This cycle will be discussed below.

[205] Castellani chapel, church of Sta Croce. 1383. This cycle will be discussed below.

[206] Church of S. Flaviano, Lazio school, early-14th century. For the frescoes and church, see Vitaliano Tiberia, *La basilica di San Flaviano a Montefiascone. Restauro di affreschi, ipotesi, conferme* (Todi: Ediart, 1987). The scene of the *Thauma de Artemide* is misinterpreted here as *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*. See also Raimond Van Marle, 'Paintings of the Beginning of the Fourteenth Century in the Church of S. Flaviano at Montefiascone', *Art Studies* 111 (1925), pp. 15-22.

[207] S. Eldrado chapel, Abbazia di Novalesa, Piedmontese school, 13th century. See George Kaftal, *Iconography of the Saints in the Painting of North West Italy* (Florence: Le lettere, 1985), pp. 512-16.

[208] Chapel of S. Nicolò, first decade of the 14th century. See Ada Labriola, 'Gli affreschi della cappella di San Niccolò nell'antico Palazzo dei Vescovi a Pistoia', *Arte Cristiana* 76, no. 724 (1988), pp. 247-66.

[209] Church of SS. Annunziata, Campanian school, 12th-13th century. Kaftal (1965), p. 801.

[210] Chapel of S. Nicolò, Udine cathedral, painted by Vitale da Bologna, 1348. This cycle will be discussed below.

[211] Church of S. Zeno, date unknown. See Meisen (1931), p. 353.

[212] Galletti chapel, church of S. Giovanni Battista, possibly painted by Jacobello del Fiore, date unknown. This cycle will be discussed below.

cycles survive.[213] The remaining fifteen cycles are located on painted panels, including *vita* icons and altarpiece predellas. Again, these panels are widespread, with provenances from Messina,[214] Milazzo,[215] Ottana,[216] Peccioli,[217] Perugia,[218] Susa,[219] Venice,[220] as well as two in Puglia,[221] and five in Florence.[222] The earliest painted cycle is attributed to the mid-eleventh century, and these statistics include narrative scenes and cycles dated until the end of the fifteenth century. The lengths of the cycles range from two scenes to sixteen.[223] There are thirty-three surviving individual narrative scenes from the life of St Nicholas, ten represented in fresco and twenty-three on altarpiece predellas. Like the cycles, these scenes appear all over Italy, and date from c.1180 to

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[213] The fresco cycles of St Nicholas in Puglia are found in: the church of Sta Marina, Muro Leccese (mid-11th century), to be discussed in Chapter 3; the church of Sta Maria Amalfitana, Monopoli (12th century), see Petrucci (1976), p. 86; the crypt of Sta Margherita, near Mottola (12th century), see Castelfranchi (1991), pp. 29, 111, 151, 171; the church of Sta Maria Maggiore, Monte S. Angelo (13th century), for the church see Stefania Mola, 'La chiesa di Santa Maria Maggiore', in *L'angelo, la montagna, il pellegrino: Monte Sant'Angelo e il santuario di San Michele del Gargano: archeologia, arte, culto, devozione dalle origini ai nostri giorni* (exhibition catalogue, Museo 'G. Trancredi', Monte Sant'Angelo, 25 Sept.-5 Nov. 1999), ed. Pina Belli d'Elia (Foggia: Claudio Grenzi, 1999), pp. 106-11; the church of SS. Nicolò e Cataldo, Lecce, south Italian school, c.15th century, see Kaftal (1965), p. 801.

[214] Altarpiece painted by Antonello da Messina, for the church of S. Niccolò dei Gentiluomini, Messina, 1463. Kaftal (1965), p. 801.

[215] Altarpiece painted by Antonio Giuffré for the Chiesa Madre, late-15th century. Kaftal (1965), p. 801.

[216] Altarpiece painted by Maestro delle tempere Francescane for Ottana cathedral, 1338-43, discussed above. Bologna (1969), pp. 252-54.

[217] Panel painting, painted for the church of S. Verano, 1270-80. This panel will be discussed below.

[218] Altarpiece painted by Fra Angelico for the chapel of S. Niccolò dei Guidalotti in the church of S. Domenico, finished 1437, discussed below; altarpiece by Benedetto Bonfigli (c.1420-96), see Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984), p. 110; Meisen (1931), p. 247.

[219] Altarpiece, located in the cathedral of Susa, Piedmontese school, second half of the 15th century. See Vittorio Viale, ed., *Seconda mostra d'arte a Palazzo Carignano. Gotico e Rinascimento in Piedmonte* (Turin: Città di Torino, 1939); Kaftal (1985), p. 513.

[220] Predella scenes by Paolo Veneziano, 1340-45, now in the Uffizi, possibly painted in Venice, to be discussed in Chapter 4.

[221] *Vita* icon, originally located in the church of Sta Margherita, Bisceglie, now in the Pinacoteca Provinciale, Bari, 13th century (this panel will be discussed below); *vita* icon, painted for the church of S. Nicola, Gravina, date unknown, see Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984), pp. 188-89.

[222] Triptych painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti, c.1327-32, for the church of S. Procolo, now in the Uffizi Galleries; panel by Agnolo Gaddi, c.1395, now in Munich; the Quaratesi altarpiece, painted by Gentile da Fabriano for the church of S. Niccolò at the S. Miniato Gate, 1425. These examples will be discussed below. The remaining 2 examples are the predella scenes by Giovanni di Francesco painted for Casa Buonarroti, mid-15th century (see Pina Ragionieri, *Michelangelo. Drawings and Other Treasures from the Casa Buonarroti, Florence* [Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 1992], esp. pp. 27-30), and Bicci da Lorenzo, see Laureat and Onori, eds (2006), pp. 288-89.

[223] Of the 31 cycles identified, 1 contains 16 scenes; 1 contains 14 scenes; 2 contain 10 scenes; 2 contain 9 scenes; 3 contain 8 scenes; 4 contain 7 scenes; 1 contains 6 scenes; 1 contains 5 scenes; 5 contain 4 scenes; 2 contain 3 scenes; 6 contain 2 scenes; 3 contain an unknown number of scenes (these figures include representations of multiple episodes from the same story).

the second half of the fifteenth century.[224] In some cases, images of the cycles or individual scenes have not been published,[225] or the cycles are incomplete due to the damage and loss of scenes over the centuries; this is particularly pertinent to the fresco cycles.

CASE STUDY ONE: THIRTEENTH-CENTURY *VITA* PANELS

Originating in the East in the thirteenth century, the *vita* panel displays a central image of a saint surrounded on four sides by episodes from their life and miracles.[226] This first case study will discuss at length two *vita* panels representing St Nicholas, one painted for the church of Sta

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[224] The individual narrative scenes in fresco are located at: a crypt in Castelbadia (13th century), published for the first time in George Kaftal, *Iconography of the Saints in the Painting of North East Italy* (Florence: Sansoni, 1978), p. 766; the church of S. Saba, Rome (late-13th century), discussed in Chapter 1; the baptistery at Varese (14th century), see Kaftal (1985), p. 513; the north wall of the *Sancta Sanctorum*, Rome, discussed in Chapter 1; the church of S. Donato, Varese (14th century), mentioned above; the church of S. Maria del Parto, Sutri (14th-15th century), see Kaftal (1965), p. 812; the parish church of Coccau (early 15th century), published for the first time by Kaftal (1978), p. 766; the cathedral of Atri (15th century), see Bruno Trubiani, *La basilica-cattedrale di Atri* (Rome: Pappagallo, 1969), esp. pp. 224-25; 2 scenes in the church of St Nicholas of Tolentino, Tolentino (14th century), see the PICA. The narrative scenes on altarpieces are: altarpiece at the church of Sta Margherita, Arezzo (1265-75), see Garrison (1949), no. 365; an altarpiece predella of unknown provenance (14th century), see Laureat and Onori, eds (2006), pp. 281ff; altarpiece by Taddeo Gaddi, now at Berlin (1335), see Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984), p. 96; altarpiece attributed to the Venetian school, unknown provenance, now at Montreal (c.1325-35), see Kaftal (1978), p. 768; predella panel painted by Lorenzo Veneziano, now at the Hermitage, St Petersburg (late 1360s), to be discussed in Chapter 4; altarpiece by Lorenzo di Nicolò Gerini, now at the Vatican (1391-1412), Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984), p. 96; altarpiece by Lorenzo di Pietro Vecchietta (1412-80), Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984), p. 108; altarpiece by Alessio Baldovinetti, painted for Casa Buonarroti at Florence (1425-99), Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984), p. 113; the oratory of SS. Lucia e Niccolò, Siena (15th century), Peter Anselm Riedl and Max Seidel, eds, *Die Kirchen von Siena* 1, no. 1 (Munich: Bruckmann, 1985), pp. 52-53; altarpiece painted by Giovanni di Francesco Toscani (15th century), now at the Uffizi Galleries, discussed above; Pisa polyptych by Masaccio, now at Staatliche Museum, Berlin (1426), Laureati and Onori, eds (2006); predella panel by Bicci di Lorenzo (1433), now at the Ashmolean, Oxford; cathedral of Susa (second half of the 15th century), mentioned above; altarpiece painted for the church of Sta Maria dell'Arzilla, Candelara, by Stefano da Venezia (date unknown), Giuseppe Fiocco, 'Le pitture venete del castello di Konopiste', *Arte Veneta* 2 (1948), pp. 7-29, Giovanni Marchini, 'Notiziario', *Bollettino d'Arte* 49 (1964), p. 276; altarpiece by Lorenzo Monaco (late-14th–early-15th century), Kaftal (1952) p. 765; altarpiece by Francesco Pesellino, now at the Galleria Buonarroti, Florence (15th century), Meisen (1931), p. 351; altarpiece by Taddeo Gaddi, chapel of St Nicholas, church of SS. Annunziata, Florence (14th century), Bacci, ed. (2006), p. 331; altarpiece by Mariotto di Nardo (1410-15), Bacci (2006), p. 309; Yale Tryptych by Ambrogio Lorenzetti (first half of 14th century), see the PICA; Polyptych of Agnano, church of S. Jacopo Apostolo, Pisan school (1390s), see the PICA; altarpiece by Bernardo Daddi, now in the Compagnia del Bigallo collection, Florence (1333), see the PICA; altarpiece by Bernardo Daddi now in the Siena Pinacoteca (1336), see the PICA; altarpiece by a follower of Bernardo Daddi, now in the National Gallery at Edinburgh (1338), see the PICA.

[225] For example the cycle at Ravello and the scene from the crypt at Castelbadia.

[226] For Byzantine *vita* icons, including an 11th-century panel of St Nicholas from Mt Sinai, see Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, 'The "Vita" Icon and the Painter as Hagiographer', *DOP* 53 (1999), pp. 149-65.

Margherita, Bisceglie, now in the Pinacoteca Provinciale at Bari,[227] and a roughly contemporary Byzantine example from the monastery of St Catherine at Mt Sinai (Figs 2.25, 2.26).[228] The Bisceglie panel will be discussed in detail in this section, notwithstanding its Puglian origins, because it is one of the earliest cycles of the life of St Nicholas extant in Italian art,[229] and it is the most extensive, thus providing an appropriate starting point for the discussions of the iconography of St Nicholas throughout this thesis. The close stylistic and iconographical similarities between this panel and the Sinai icon will reveal that the Byzantine *vita* panel was an important vehicle for the transition of the iconography of St Nicholas from East to West. The Bisceglie panel does not faithfully reproduce all aspects of the Byzantine iconography, however, and the comparison exposes an emerging, alternative visual interpretation of St Nicholas's life. This study will therefore also explore the relationship between the pictorial cycle of the saint's life and the Latin literary traditions. As discussed in Chapter One, Jacopo da Voragine's influential *Legenda Aurea* was also produced in the thirteenth century; was the painter of the Bisceglie panel inspired by this literary tradition? On the other hand, because the precise date of the panel is unknown, do the corresponding details between the panel and Voragine's text in fact reveal that the panel, and perhaps others like it now lost, may have played a role in consolidating the new literary tradition?

A third St Nicholas panel to be discussed in this study provides a remarkable alternative to the traditional *vita* panel form. Dated to the third quarter of the thirteenth century, and probably commissioned for the church of S. Verano at Peccioli, near Pisa, this panel shows that eastern formal traditions continued to be assimilated but could be treated very differently (Fig. 2.27). In this example, the *vita* panel form continues to be a means of east-west transition, but the iconography itself reflects the personal concerns of the donor rather than adherence to the eastern

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[227] For the panel, see Ševčenko (1999), pp. 152-53. The church of Sta Margherita was built in 1197 by the Falcone family, just outside the walls of Bisceglie. See Mario Cosmai, *Bisceglie nella storia e nell'arte. Vita di un commune Pugliese* (Bisceglie: Il Palazzuolo, 1968), pp. 247-50.

[228] See Ševčenko (2006), pp. 61-70.

[229] Only 4 cycles are dated earlier, those at Muro Leccese, Monopoli, Mottola and Ravello.

iconographical or hagiographical traditions of the saint. The comparison made in this case study between the Bisceglie, Sinai and Peccioli panels is a development of the same comparison made by Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, who focuses upon the extent to which the two Italian panels adhere to the Byzantine *vita* icon form.[230] This study will push Ševčenko's analysis further to consider alternative influences upon the panels, in particular the Latin textual sources for the saint's life, and will discuss what the inconsistencies between the Bisceglie and Peccioli panels reveal about the possible alternative interpretations and uses of the iconography of St Nicholas in Italy.

CHOICE OF SCENES

With sixteen scenes, the Bisceglie panel represents the longest surviving cycle of St Nicholas in Italian art. The scenes read in order from left to right, starting at the top left-hand corner: *The Birth and Bath Miracle*; *The Schooling of St Nicholas*; two scenes from *The Three Destitute Maidens*;[231] *St Nicholas is Chosen as Bishop at Myra*; *St Nicholas is Consecrated as Bishop*; two scenes of *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*;[232] two scenes from *The Nun and the Oil*;[233] three scenes from the *Praxis de Stratelates*;[234] two scenes from *Adeodatus*,[235] and lastly a damaged scene that cannot be determined. The Sinai icon also has sixteen scenes, which do not read in such strict chronological order: *The Birth and Bath Miracle*, *The Schooling of St Nicholas*, *St Nicholas is Consecrated as Priest*, then *Bishop*; *St Nicholas Holds Mass*; *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*; fives scenes from the *Praxis de Stratelates*;[236] *The Tree of Plakoma*; two scenes

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[230] See Ševčenko (1999), pp. 152-54.

[231] The scenes show St Nicholas donating a bag of gold to the father of the maidens, and the father thanking St Nicholas.

[232] The scenes show St Nicholas dispelling devils from a ship at sea and the 3 sailors thanking St Nicholas.

[233] The scenes from this miracle are: the nun hands the oil to the sailors; St Nicholas tells the sailors to throw the oil into the sea.

[234] The scenes are: *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution*; *The Three Generals in Prison*, and *St Nicholas Appears to Emperor Constantine*.

[235] In these scenes, St Nicholas grabs Adeodatus, then returns him to his family.

[236] These are: *The Three Generals in Prison*; *St Nicholas Appears to Ablabius*; *St Nicholas Appears to Emperor Constantine*; *The Three Generals Come Before Constantine*; *The Generals Thank St Nicholas*.

from *Adeodatus*;[237] a sixth scene from the *Praxis de Stratelates*,[238] and *The Death of St Nicholas*. In this cycle, the sixth scene from the *Praxis de Stratelates* miracle is separated from the preceding five, and the death scene appears after the posthumous miracle of St Nicholas's rescue of Adeodatus.

The two cycles display many of the same episodes from the life and miracles of St Nicholas: the Birth and Bath Miracle; the Schooling of St Nicholas; three scenes from the *Praxis de Stratelates*;[239] St Nicholas's Consecration as Bishop, and two scenes of St Nicholas rescuing Adeodatus. The iconography, style and composition of these scenes are very similar: in the representation of *The Schooling of St Nicholas*, the infant saint is seen walking from the figure on the left towards his teacher on the right on both panels (Figs 2.28, 2.29). The scenes are set within similar architectural settings, and the movement and gesture of St Nicholas are identical in each case; the only significant development is that on the Bisceglie panel the teacher is a bishop rather than a monk. In the *Praxis de Stratelates* scene of *The Three Generals in Prison*, the figures on both panels are seated with similar poses, within a prison represented by a cell between two towers with an arch above; the Bisceglie panel has additional ironwork bars covering the entrance (Figs 2.30, 2.31).

On both panels, the central images of St Nicholas are almost identical. The saint appears in the clothing of an orthodox bishop in both cases,[240] and above the saint's shoulders are small representations of Christ and the Virgin, who commonly appear on Byzantine panels representing St Nicholas.[241] Their presence signifies a miracle of the saint: according to legend, St Nicholas attended the Council of Nicea where he was imprisoned for condemning Arianism. While in

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[237] Again, the 2 scenes from this miracle are St Nicholas grabbing Adeodatus, and returning him to his family.

[238] The 6th scene shows *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution*.

[239] The 3 scenes that the cycles share from the *Praxis de Stratelates* are: *The Three Generals in Prison*, *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution*, and *St Nicholas Appears to Emperor Constantine*.

[240] As will be discussed in Chapter 3, in the region of Puglia, where Byzantine artistic and religious influences remained strong throughout the Middle Ages, St Nicholas did not frequently appear in the clothing of a western bishop as he did elsewhere in Italy, even after the 13th century.

[241] See, for example, the panels discussed in the Catalogue II section of Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 192-211.

prison Christ and the Virgin appeared to him, returning to him the *omophorion* and the gospels, as they are seen to be doing in the panels.[242] The similarities between the two *vita* panels, as well as the identical treatment of the saint's clothing, hair and facial expressions,[243] indicate a common visual source for the two panels. The presence of Christ and the Virgin suggest that the source was Byzantine, either directly referenced by the Bisceglie painter or indirectly through other Puglian examples.

The representation of the *Praxis de Stratelates* story on the Bisceglie panel is also indicative of Byzantine influence. This story is the most frequently represented story from the saint's life in Byzantine art.[244] In this legend, St Nicholas appeals to Emperor Constantine in a dream for the release of three innocent generals. This story establishes St Nicholas as a powerful intercessor to whom condemned men could effectively pray, while also giving his cult legitimacy through imperial approval, and emphasising the divine nature of the emperor's rule. The Sinai panel devotes six scenes to the *Praxis de Stratelates*, which indeed emphasise the role of the emperor. The Italian St Nicholas cycles which predate the Bisceglie icon, all of which are located in the region of Puglia, contain the *Praxis de Stratelates* story, the earliest episode from the saint's life known in Italy.[245] It is logical to suggest that the strong Byzantine tradition in Puglia influenced the stories that first appeared in the Italian cycles.[246]

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[242] For this miracle, see Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 463-64.

[243] For example, in both panels the saint gazes to the viewer's right with a slight frown which creases his forehead. His eyebrows arch in a similar manner, and beneath the long, thin nose, the saint's beard and cheeks have the same shape. The collar of the bishop's *phenolion* is folded in the same way and hangs from the saint's right arm to reveal the *sticharion* undergarment.

[244] Ševčenko (1983), p. 87. Of the 56 cycles discussed by Ševčenko, 30 contain the scene of St Nicholas Appears to Emperor Constantine, making it the most frequently depicted episode from the life of St Nicholas in Byzantine art.

[245] As discussed in Chapter 1, see p. 24, fn. 4; p. 26, fn. 11. The early fresco cycles are found in the church of Sta Marina at Muro Leccese (mid-11th century), the church of Sta Maria Amalfitana at Monopoli (12th century), and the crypt of Sta Margherita near Mottola (12th century). The cycle at Muro Leccese will be discussed in Chapter 3.

[246] The early Puglian cycles include scenes which are amongst the most frequently depicted in Byzantine art. For example the cycle at Muro Leccese, which also contains scenes of *St Nicholas is Consecrated as Deacon*, *The Tree of Plakoma* and *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*. The appearance of these scenes in the early Italian cycles and their subsequent later absence, particularly of the story of St Nicholas felling the Tree of Plakoma and his Consecration as Deacon, suggests that the stories lost importance for the

The representations of the *Praxis de Stratelates* story on the Sinai and Bisceglie panels differ considerably, however, and suggest additional influences upon the iconographical choices made for the Bisceglie panel that are inconsistent with Byzantine tradition. On the Bisceglie panel, the *Praxis de Stratelates* story is much less prominent as only three scenes are depicted; this reflects the fact that in Italian St Nicholas cycles, the *Praxis de Stratelates* story is only the third-most frequently depicted story after the Three Destitute Maidens and St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm.[247] The three particular scenes represented on the Bisceglie panel are, however, the three most commonly represented scenes from the *Praxis de Stratelates* miracle in Byzantine art.[248] In the scenes depicted on the Bisceglie panel, St Nicholas's role in this story is emphasised over that of the emperor, indicating that the saint played an increasing role in maintaining justice, but also that the intention behind the choice of scenes was perhaps simply to present to the viewer the most recognisable scenes from this miracle to facilitate identification of the saint.

Reducing the number of scenes dedicated to the *Praxis de Stratelates* miracle allows more space to be given to other stories. For example, two scenes from the story of the Three Destitute Maidens appear in this cycle, which is entirely absent from the Sinai panel. This omission from the Byzantine panel is not unprecedented: although it is one of the most popular stories in the Greek lives of St Nicholas, it is very rarely represented in Byzantine art. In contrast, this miracle became the most popular of all St Nicholas scenes represented in Italian art in the later Middle Ages, appearing for the first time in the twelfth-century frescoes of the crypt of Sta

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Italian audience, and can be considered a particularly 'Byzantine' interpretation of the identity of St Nicholas.

[247] The scene of *The Three Destitute Maidens* appears in 32 of the 62 representations of the life of St Nicholas (of these, 23 appear in cycles, 9 in individual scenes); *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm* appears in 18 (11 in cycles, 7 in individual scenes); the *Praxis de Stratelates* story appears in 16 (12 in cycles, 4 in individual scenes).

[248] The episodes of St Nicholas Appears to Emperor Constantine, St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution, and the Three Generals in Prison, which appear on the Bisceglie panel, are the 3 most commonly represented episodes from the *Praxis de Stratelates* story in Byzantine art, appearing in 30, 29 and 26 cycles respectively.

Margherita, near Mottola in Puglia.[249] This scene does not appear in the earliest St Nicholas cycles elsewhere in Puglia which, alongside this scene's relatively low popularity in Byzantine art, suggests its inclusion is indicative of a considered choice rather than an adherence to iconographic tradition. The underlying theme of this story is the generosity and charitable nature of St Nicholas, aspects of sanctity which were given particular importance in the thirteenth century following the establishment of the mendicant orders.[250]

LITERARY SOURCES

The scenes depicted on the Sinai panel appear to be derived from a number of different Greek sources. For example, the Birth, Schooling, Consecration (as Priest and Bishop) and Death of St Nicholas are mentioned in the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*, as are The Tree of Plakoma and St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm. The episode of the Tree of Plakoma does not in fact appear in any other pre-twelfth century Greek text. The story of St Nicholas rescuing Basil (or Adeodatus), to which the Sinai panel gives two scenes, is absent from the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae* and does not appear in the Greek texts until the tenth century *Vita Acephala*.[251] The *Praxis de Stratelates*, to which the Sinai panel devotes six scenes, is not described in the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*; however, this miracle does appear in the majority of the Greek lives,[252] and its inclusion on the Sinai panel may be due to its fame and popularity rather than to the painter's conscious attempt at combining different textual sources. The Sinai panel therefore does not adhere to a specific written life, and the chronological inconsistencies indicate that perhaps the painter did not follow the texts, but instead illustrated the familiar and perhaps widely represented stories from the existing St Nicholas

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[249] Ševčenko (1983), p. 87. An image of this scene has not been published. I was unable to enter the crypt to view the scene as it is currently closed for restoration.

[250] As discussed in Chapter 1.

[251] Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 268-75. The *Vita Acephala* is dated between 980 and 1050.

[252] Of the 25 texts that Ševčenko discusses, 15 mention this miracle.

iconography.[253] In this respect, the painter of the Sinai panel achieved a similar result to Jacopo da Voragine, the compiler of the *Legenda Aurea*.

The Bisceglie panel does not appear to be constrained by the Greek texts, and an additional source seems to have influenced its painter. In fact, the scenes represented are closely related to the life of St Nicholas described in the thirteenth-century *Legenda Aurea*. Not all stories from the *Legenda Aurea* are included, for example the Death of St Nicholas; however, the chronology and events depicted display close affinities to Voragine's text. This is particularly apparent in the scenes concerning Nicholas's consecrations: on the Sinai panel, Nicholas is shown being consecrated as both priest and bishop, and is seen celebrating mass. According to several Greek lives of St Nicholas, he was consecrated as priest when he was nineteen years old.[254] On the Bisceglie panel St Nicholas is only consecrated as a bishop, as he is in the *Legenda Aurea*.[255] The preceding scene of St Nicholas being welcomed as bishop (second scene from the top on the left-hand border) is not represented anywhere in Byzantine art, and does not appear in the Greek texts (Fig. 2.32).[256] This scene is related to how Nicholas was miraculously chosen as bishop, which Voragine relates in some detail. In the Italian cycles in general, St Nicholas is nearly always consecrated bishop, and rarely deacon or priest as occurs in Byzantine cycles,[257] and the scenes of consecration are generally preceded by St Nicholas's miraculous selection as bishop.[258]

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[253] This panel is the earliest surviving that represents *The Tree of Plakoma*; others may have existed. The suggestion here is that the Sinai icon was a response to existing St Nicholas iconography, rather than a copy of a preceding panel that no longer exists.

[254] See *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*, *Vita Compilata* and *Encomium Neophyti*. Ševčenko (1983), p. 79.

[255] Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 23-24.

[256] Ševčenko (1999), p. 152.

[257] Of the 56 cycles discussed by Ševčenko, 19 depict St Nicholas being Consecrated as Deacon, 14 as Priest, and 24 as Bishop. In Italian cycles, St Nicholas is only represented being Consecrated as Deacon in the mid-11th century fresco cycle at Muro Leccese, located in Puglia where Byzantine artistic traditions were very strong, and the Greek texts of St Nicholas would have been known to the Greek population.

[258] This is the case on the altarpiece by Ambrogio Lorenzetti, to be discussed below, and the fresco cycles at Novalesa, Pistoia and Susa. In total, 7 Italian cycles represent scenes concerning St Nicholas becoming Bishop of Myra. At Novalesa, there are 3 scenes depicting St Nicholas's selection and consecration as bishop, reflecting the cycle's monastic context (the chapel of S. Eldrado in the Abbazia of Novalesa). At Pistoia the scenes of the Selection and Consecration as Bishop are likely related to the cycle's location in the bishop's palace.

The sources for the Bisceglie panel cannot be securely identified. They may have included a combination of Greek visual sources, the *Legenda Aurea*, or any of the Latin literature from which the *Legenda Aurea* was compiled, if indeed the panel post-dates Voragine's work. On the other hand, panels such as this may have actually played a role in determining the life of St Nicholas that Voragine presents. The *Legenda Aurea*, as discussed in Chapter One, was compiled from existing Greek and Latin lives of St Nicholas; perhaps the Bisceglie painter was also aware of these sources, and like Voragine was instrumental in bringing the two traditions together, as Ševčenko suggests.[259] The close date of the production of both the Bisceglie icon and the *Legenda Aurea* indicate that in the second half of the thirteenth century, both the Italian hagiographical and iconographical traditions of the cult of St Nicholas experienced emerging Latin traditions that were independent from Byzantine sources. The similarities between the Bisceglie panel and the life of St Nicholas from the *Legenda Aurea* indicate a close relationship between the saint's hagiography and iconography, which in turn illustrates the complex ways in which the image and text of a saint's life could become intertwined.

ALTERNATIVE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE *THAUMA DE ARTEMIDE*

The reasons for deviating from Byzantine models in the Bisceglie panel could represent an attempt to make the St Nicholas cycle more relevant to its Italian audience. This concern is also discernable in the representation of one of St Nicholas's sea miracles, the *Thauma de Artemide*. This story is depicted in two scenes either side of the central figure of St Nicholas, four scenes from the top (Figs 2.33, 2.34). The first scene shows a devil, disguised as a nun, tricking a group of pilgrims at sea into carrying a vial containing explosive oil to the church of St Nicholas at Myra. In the second scene, St Nicholas appears to the pilgrims and instructs them to pour the oil into the sea; in so doing the oil bursts into flames. This story was known in the East through the Greek lives, for example the ninth-century *Vita per Michaëlem*, but was rarely represented

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[259] Ševčenko (1999), p. 153.

there,[260] and it is indeed omitted from the Sinai panel. In turn, the Sinai panel has an alternative scene from the same miracle, located in the bottom-right of the cycle: *The Tree of Plakoma* (Fig. 2.35). It was the devil that St Nicholas had expelled from the Tree of Plakoma who later sought revenge by disguising as a nun and tricking the sailors into taking the explosive oil to the saint's tomb. The earlier part of this story is however rarely represented in Italy, appearing in only three cycles.[261]

This iconographical choice is another example of East and West drawing different concerns from, and placing different emphases on, the same legend. In the Byzantine panel prominence is given to St Nicholas dispelling heresy and the worship of pagan gods from his diocese. St Nicholas was praised for his success in these matters by many ninth-century lives, including the *Vita per Michaëlem*.[262] This concern was pertinent at the time of Nicholas's life, the fourth century, when the newly-established eastern Christian Empire sought to eradicate heretical pagan worship; later, in the thirteenth century, the empire was concerned with keeping its territories free from Ottoman invaders. This concern is not evident in the West, however, and is not emphasised within the corpus of Italian St Nicholas cycles and narrative scenes; the *Thauma de Artemide* is only depicted in ten of the Italian cycles,[263] and only one of these depicts both the Tree of Plakoma and the subsequent events of the Nun and the Oil.[264]

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[260] Ševčenko (1999), p. 152. In Ševčenko (1983), this story is grouped with other sea miracles, so the exact number of representations of this story in Byzantine art is not specified. The scene does appear in the cycle at Thessaloniki, discussed below.

[261] In Byzantine cycles, the story of the Tree of Plakoma appears in 19 out of 56 cycles; in Italy, it appears in 3 out of 31 (those of the church of S. Marina at Muro Leccese, Puglia; the church of S. Giovanni Battista at Vittorio Veneto, and the altarpiece painted by Antonio Giuffré for the Chiesa Madre at Milazzo), and is not represented in individual scenes of the life of St Nicholas. In contrast, in Italian art, the Nun and the Oil appears in 7 cycles and narrative scenes: the Bisceglie and Ottana panels, and the cycles at Novalesa, Pistoia, Montefiascone, Assisi, and Vittorio Veneto. For the story, see Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 24-25.

[262] Ševčenko (1983), p. 22, fn. 26. See also *Encomium Methodii*, the *Encomium* of George Chartophylax (Anrich [1913-17], vol. 1, pp. 92-96), and the *Encomium* by Emperor Leo the Wise (Migne [1857-66], vol. 107, cols 203-28).

[263] This figure includes representations of *The Tree of Plakoma* and *The Nun and the Oil*.

[264] This cycle is the late-14th/early-15th-century fresco cycle at Vittorio Veneto, discussed below.

Heresy is not the main concern in the representation of this story on the Bisceglie icon. Emphasis is placed instead upon the events which take place at sea, which are represented in two scenes: the nun appearing with the oil, and St Nicholas instructing the sailors to pour the oil into the sea.[265] These two scenes, plus another sea miracle which appears on the left-hand side of the panel, give the cycle as a whole a greater maritime emphasis, and the four billowing sails of the Bisceglie panel far outnumber the one obscured sail in the Sinai panel. The cult of St Nicholas was important in maritime communities because of the saint's reputation for saving ships during storms, which, after the story of the Three Destitute Maidens, was the most frequently represented St Nicholas scene in Italian art.[266] The prominent ships on the Bisceglie panel also remind the viewer that it was by ship that the Norman merchants recovered the body of St Nicholas and brought him to Bari in the year 1087. As Chapter Three will show, in the region of Puglia where the Bisceglie panel was produced, the strong bond between urban centres and the sea resulted in a need for an effective maritime saint. Invocations to St Nicholas were common amongst sailors, and the *Legenda Aurea* includes a prayer made by sailors threatened by a storm while at sea: 'Nicholas, Servant of God, if what we have heard about you is true, let us experience your help now.'[267] The choice of representing two scenes from the *Thauma de Artemide* story in which St Nicholas appears in a boat may have been intended to acknowledge the saint's role as a patron of seafarers. In the portal town of Bisceglie, this role would have been particularly pertinent.[268] The Bisceglie panel therefore displays concerns that are linked to the panel's place of production in southern Italy, which are not present in the cult's eastern hagiographical or iconographical traditions.

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[265] These 2 scenes also appear together at Montefiascone.

[266] See p. 82, fn. 247, above.

[267] 'Nicolae famule Dei, si vera sunt, quae de te audimus, nunc ea experiamur.' Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 24; the English translation is from Ryan (1993), p. 22.

[268] The relationship between St Nicholas and the sea, and the saint's identity as a protector of sailors and merchants, will be explored in Chapters 3 and 4.

THE PECCIOLI PANEL

A second Italian panel displaying scenes from the life of St Nicholas shows that within the corpus of Italian *vita* panels, contrasting concerns could be emphasised (Fig. 2.27). This panel was produced in the thirteenth century for the church of S. Verano at Peccioli, a town located about 20 km south-east of the port of Pisa.[269] Like the ports of Puglia, Pisa was also a thriving commercial centre, dependent upon the sea for its trading relationships with the West and the Eastern Empire, and for its defence by the powerful Pisan fleet.[270] Yet the iconography of the Peccioli panel does not include the maritime references that are so prominent on the Bisceglie panel; in fact they are entirely absent, and the scenes are all contained within urban, architectural settings. As suggested by Ševčenko, the Peccioli panel addresses the private concerns of the female donor, who is seen kneeling before St Nicholas in the bottom-right hand scene, rather than the collective concerns of a seafaring community.[271]

The cycle on the Peccioli panel displays just four scenes from the life and miracles of St Nicholas. The scenes represented are *The Birth and Bath Miracle* at the top-left, *The Three Destitute Maidens* at the bottom-right, and two scenes from *Adeodatus* at the bottom-left and top-right hand corners. This panel adheres to the Byzantine *vita* icon form, with a central St Nicholas surrounded by scenes from his life, but nevertheless has a very different arrangement: the saint, here dressed as a western bishop with a cope, mitre and crosier, is not contained within a border but fills the whole length of the panel and overlaps the flanking scenes. In the top-right scene in which St Nicholas returns Adeodatus to his family, a figure behind the white table gestures towards the crosier of the central St Nicholas which juts into the scene, as if to give thanks to this saint, rather than the figure of St Nicholas within the scene itself. The lack of strict compositional

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[269] For the Peccioli panel, see Mariagiulia Burresi and Antonino Caleca, eds, *Cimabue a Pisa: la pittura pisana del duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa: Pacini, 2005), pp. 182-83; Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 293-94; Ševčenko (1999), pp. 152-54.

[270] See Gerald W. Day, 'Manuel and the Genoese: A Reappraisal of Byzantine Commercial Policy in the Late Twelfth Century', *JEH* 37, no. 2 (Jun. 1977), pp. 289-301; David Abulafia, 'Pisan Commercial Colonies and Consulates in Twelfth-Century Sicily', *EHR* 93, no. 366 (Jan. 1978), pp. 68-81.

[271] Ševčenko (1999), p. 153.

structure indicates a relaxing of the absolute compartmentalisation of the Bisceglie and Sinai panels, and is consistent with other Pisan works from the thirteenth century.[272]

In the Peccioli cycle, two of the four scenes selected illustrate episodes from one story, that of St Nicholas's rescue of the child Adeodatus. Because this story is emphasised over the others, and included at the expense of other, more common episodes from the saint's life, it is likely that this story held particular importance for the panel's donor. Ševčenko suggests that the theme of the Adeodatus miracle, that of the protection of children, was of interest to the female patron.[273] Indeed, all the scenes represented on the Peccioli panel depict intimate, family settings, either within a bedroom or at a dining table. The story of the Three Destitute Maidens also tells of the saint's role in protecting youths; the moment from the story that is illustrated does not show the three daughters but their father, reminding the viewer of the familial relationship within the story and the father's gratitude to St Nicholas for protecting his daughters. The first scene in the cycle, in the top-left hand corner, illustrates the Birth of St Nicholas and the first miracle he performed as a baby. Three different stages of childhood are therefore represented in the panel: infancy, youth (represented by Adeodatus), and adolescence, as suggested by the three absent daughters who are of marrying age.

The protection of children was a common request of the saints during the Middle Ages because of high rates of child mortality.[274] Infant deaths affected all levels of society, even the wealthy who could commission altarpieces. Religious faith gave comfort to parents, who may have sought solace in devotional images, and altarpieces featuring saints often included stories about their power to revive or heal children, for example Simone Martini's Beato Agostino

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[272] See, for example, the contemporary dossal of *St Francis with Scenes from his Life* attributed to the Pisan artist Giunta di Capitino, in Burresi and Caleca, eds (2005), p. 126.

[273] Ševčenko (1999), p. 153.

[274] The memoranda books kept in the 15th century by Florentine patricians provide evidence of high child mortality rates in the later Middle Ages. In these books, the author would record birth and death dates of all his children, in chronological order. The memoranda books are published by Gian Mario Anselmi, et al, eds, *La 'memoria' dei mercatores: tendenze ideologiche, ricordanze, artigianato in versi nella Firenze del quattrocento* (Bologna: Patron, 1980), pp. 93-149. See also Cathleen Sara Hoeniger, 'The Child Miracles in Simone Martini's Beato Agostino Novello Altarpiece', *ZK* 65/3 (2002), p. 303.

Novello altarpiece of c.1324 (Fig. 2.36). Painted for the church of Sant'Agostino in Siena, the altarpiece depicts a local Augustinian holy man, Agostino Novello, and four posthumous miracles: Agostino's revival of a young boy who lost an eye during an attack by a wild dog; his rescue of a child who fell from a balcony; his resuscitation of a fallen knight who was crushed by his horse, and his resurrection of an infant thrown from his cradle. Three of these miracles show the beato's role in the protection, healing and resuscitation of small children who had fallen victim to common dangers of contemporary communal life.[275]

The Peccioli panel therefore addresses a general concern of widespread significance during the time of its production. In this panel, St Nicholas's role as the protector of children is emphasised above all others; this shows that even within a strong maritime community where the saint's importance to sailors and merchants would be the obvious role to emphasise, St Nicholas could appeal to alternative audiences. It is interesting that St Nicholas was chosen for the panel, as other saints were perhaps more obvious choices for child protection.[276] Evidently, the cult of St Nicholas in Italy responded to a variety of needs.

In conclusion, the iconography of the Bisceglie panel reveals that the location of the panel's production was an important influence behind the choice of scenes represented, particularly the scenes with a maritime emphasis. Despite the strong Byzantine artistic influences in this region, an alternative emphasis could be placed upon the saint. The iconography of St Nicholas in Italian art was therefore responsive to influences beyond the hagiographical traditions; in turn, the Bisceglie panel can also reveal much about the social and religious concerns of the context in which it was produced. At the same time, in another region of Italy where a similar maritime resonance may be expected, the visual representation of the life and miracles of St Nicholas reveals very different concerns that were particular to the panel's donor. The St Nicholas cycle was extensive and flexible. This case study has revealed the diversity

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[275] For Simone Martini's altarpiece, see Hoeniger (2002), pp. 303-24.

[276] For example St Francis, as will be discussed below, see p. 99.

evident within the cycles displayed on the St Nicholas *vita* panels, and the ways in which the saint's role could be constructed to respond to different situations and needs. The Peccioli panel further demonstrates that the reduction in the number of scenes depicted did not restrict the ability of St Nicholas to respond to a particular need; on the contrary, the selection allowed the iconography to focus upon one particular aspect of the saint's life and miracles, without the distraction of additional stories.

CASE STUDY TWO: FOURTEENTH-CENTURY FRANCISCAN CYCLES

Fresco cycles and narrative scenes constitute the second-largest group within the corpus of Italian monumental St Nicholas cycles, after those displayed on altarpieces. Within this corpus, distinct clusters can be discerned, as the cycles and narrative scenes generally fall into one of three locations: Puglia, central Italy and north-east Italy.[277] The majority of these cycles and scenes survive from the fourteenth century.[278] The cycles and scenes in Puglia will be discussed in Chapter Three; those in central and north-east Italy will be the focus of the following two case studies.

The first section will look at two cycles in central Italy and Tuscany that were produced within a Franciscan context: the cycle in the St Nicholas chapel of the Lower Church of S. Francesco at Assisi, and the Castellani chapel in the church of Sta Croce, Florence.[279] In both

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[277] Of the corpus of 16 fresco cycles, 5 survive in Puglia, 5 in central Italy, 4 in north-east Italy, 1 in north-west Italy and 1 in southern Italy (not Puglia). Of the 10 individual narrative scenes in fresco, 5 survive in central Italy, 1 in north-east Italy, 2 in north-west Italy, and 2 in Rome (discussed in Chapter 1).

[278] Of the 16 fresco cycles and 10 individual narrative scenes I have identified, 1 is dated to the 11th century (Muro Leccese); 1 to the 11th or 12th (Novalesa); 2 to the 12th (Monopoli, Mottola); 1 to the 12th or 13th (Ravello); 3 to the 13th (Monte S. Angelo, Castelbadia, Rome); 11 to the 14th (Bolzano, Pistoia, Montefiascone, Assisi, Udine, Castellani, Rome, 2 each at Varese and Tolentino); 1 to the 14th or 15th (Sutri); 5 to the 15th century (Lecce, Vittorio Veneto, Arezzo, Coccau, Atri), and the date of 1 cycle is unknown (Verona).

[279] 3 other cycles survive in this region, located in: the church of S. Flaviano at Montefiascone, dated to the early-14th century, see Tiberia (1987); the St Nicholas chapel in the Bishop's Palace at Pistoia, also dated to the early-14th century, see Labriola (1988), pp. 247-66; and the church of S. Domenico at Arezzo, dated to the 15th century, see Mario Salmi, *San Domenico e San Francesco di Arezzo* (Rome: Del Turco, 1951), p. 21. The cycle at Pistoia is unfortunately badly damaged, making an iconographical discussion impossible.

locations, the cycles appear in a transept chapel to the right of the apse.[280] These cycles are particularly pertinent to this chapter because the Franciscan Order had strong links with the Levant, artistic as well as spiritual, and is considered an important vehicle for artistic exchange between Byzantium and Italy.[281] Eastern iconographical influences within the Franciscan St Nicholas cycles are therefore to be expected. However, these cycles in fact demonstrate that while their Franciscan context may have provided an alternative conduit for the east-west transition of the iconography of St Nicholas, this iconography in fact continued to move further away from the Byzantine tradition. The cycles instead responded to the specific concerns of their mendicant and lay patrons. To emphasise this point these cycles will be examined in relation to a contemporary Byzantine cycle, located on the east wall of the narthex, above the entrance to the *naos*, of the church of St Nicholas Orphanos at Thessaloniki.

THE CYCLES

The cycle in the Lower Church of S. Francesco at Assisi contains ten scenes from the life and miracles of St Nicholas, painted around the arch just inside the entrance to the St Nicholas chapel (Fig. 2.37).[282] This chapel was built around the year 1294 by Cardinal Napoleone Orsini as a burial chapel for his brother Gian Gaetano. At this time, the Lower Church was undergoing large-scale remodelling work, to allow easier lay access to the tomb of St Francis.[283] The dedication of the chapel to St Nicholas was chosen in honour of the donor's uncle, Pope Nicholas III Orsini (1277-80). A scene commemorating the dedication is painted on the southern wall above the entrance, depicting St Nicholas presenting Gian Gaetano Orsini, and St Francis presenting

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[280] At Assisi, the chapel of St Nicholas is located in the north transept of the Lower Church, as opposed to the south transept at Sta Croce, because the church is orientated to the west.

[281] For the role of the Franciscan Order in artistic exchange between Byzantium and Italy, see Anne Derbes and Amy Neff, 'Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere', in *Byzantium. Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, ed. Helen C. Evans (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 449-88.

[282] For the cycle, including a diagram of the location of the scenes, see Gianfranco Malafarina, ed., *La basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi* (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 2005), pp. 124-29.

[283] See Bruno Zanardi, *Giotto e Pietro Cavallini. La questione di Assisi e il cantiere medievale della pittura a fresco* (Milan: Skira, 2002), p. 194; Janet Robson, 'Judas and the Franciscans: Perfidy Pictured in Lorenzetti's Passion Cycle at Assisi', *AB* 86, no. 1 (Mar. 2004), p. 31.

Cardinal Napoleone, to Christ (Figs 1.12, 1.13). The date and artist of the St Nicholas cycle are disputed; however, Bruno Zanardi has recently concluded that the cycle was produced by the workshop of Giotto in two phases, in 1297 shortly after the chapel's completion, and between 1305 and 1311 when the workshop also painted the adjacent Magdalen chapel.[284] Unfortunately the St Nicholas cycle is damaged: of the original ten scenes, only eight are clearly identifiable, and depict *The Three Destitute Maidens*; three scenes from the *Praxis de Stratelates*;[285] two scenes from *Adeodatus*;[286] *St Nicholas and the Statue-Beating Jew*, and *St Nicholas Revives a Boy Strangled by the Devil*. The two damaged scenes take place at sea: in one St Nicholas is seen swooping down from the top-right hand corner gesturing towards a ship that is being thrown about by waves, suggesting the scene to be one of *St Nicholas Rescuing a Ship in a Storm*. In the other, the saint can be seen standing in a small boat approaching another boat further out to sea; this scene is probably taken from *The Nun and the Oil* (Figs 2.38, 2.39).[287]

The contemporary Byzantine cycle at the church of St Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, was painted during the decade 1310-20 shortly after the church was founded.[288] The cycle contains thirteen scenes: *The Birth* and *The Schooling of St Nicholas*; *St Nicholas is Consecrated as Deacon*, *Priest*, and *Bishop*; *The Three Destitute Maidens*; four scenes from the *Praxis de*

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[284] Zanardi (2002), pp. 7-12, 131, 195-97. The cycle had previously been vaguely attributed to the 'Master of St Nicholas', painted around 1307, or to Palmerino di Guido, 1297-1300. See Millard Meiss, *Giotto and Assisi* (New York: New York University Press, 1960), p. 4; Giorgio Bonsanti, et al, eds, *La basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi = The Basilica of St Francis in Assisi* (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 2002), vol. 2, pp. 434-37.

[285] The 3 scenes represented from the *Praxis de Stratelates* are: *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution*; *St Nicholas Appears to Emperor Constantine*; *The Three Generals Thank St Nicholas*.

[286] The 2 scenes from the story of *Adeodatus* represent St Nicholas grabbing Adeodatus, and returning him to his parents.

[287] The damaged scenes are identified thus in Malafarina, ed. (2005), p. 124.

[288] For the church and decoration see Chrysanthi Mavropoulou-Tsioumi, *The Church of St Nicholas Orphanos*, trans. Deborah Whitehouse (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1986); Ševčenko (1983), pp. 42-43.

Stratelates,[289] *The Nun and the Oil*; *The Miracle of the Corn Ships*; and *The Death of St Nicholas* (Fig. 2.40).

Lastly, a later fourteenth-century Franciscan cycle was commissioned by the banker Michele Castellani (d.1383), and is located in the Castellani chapel of the church of Sta Croce, the largest Franciscan church in Florence (Fig. 2.41).[290] The chapel is located in the south transept of the church, at the end nearest the nave. This shorter fresco cycle, dated to c.1384,[291] is painted on the right entrance bay and pier of the chapel, and depicts: *The Three Destitute Maidens*, *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution* from the *Praxis de Stratelates*, *The Innkeeper and the Three Pickled Boys*, three scenes from *The Boy and the Golden Cup*,[292] and three scenes from *The Jew and the Cheating Christian*.[293] The St Nicholas cycle is part of the chapel programme which also includes cycles from the lives of St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist, and St Anthony Abbot. At least three artists are believed to have worked in the chapel, and the St Nicholas cycle has been attributed to the workshop of Agnolo Gaddi.[294]

ASSISI AND THESSALONIKI

The Assisi and Thessaloniki cycles were painted within a few years of one another, and there are immediate similarities between them. For example, they both contain scenes from the legends of the Three Destitute Maidens, the Nun and the Oil, and the *Praxis de Stratelates*, three of the more

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[289] These 4 scenes are: *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution*; *The Three Generals in Prison*; *St Nicholas Appears to Emperor Constantine*, and *St Nicholas Appears to Ablabius*.

[290] For the cycle, see Cole (1977), esp. pp. 9-17, 78-79.

[291] No documents survive concerning the commissioning or payment of the chapel or frescoes. Michele Castellani's will of 1383, in which the testator left 1000 florins for the erection and decoration of a burial chapel for himself and his heirs, provides a *terminus post quem*. See Cole (1977), p. 78.

[292] The Castellani cycle includes 3 episodes from this story: the boy falling into the sea, still holding the cup; St Nicholas returning the boy to his father (still holding the cup); the boy's father praying at the altar of St Nicholas. This miracle is discussed on p. 101, fn. 316, below.

[293] This miracle will be discussed on p. 102, fn. 317. The 3 scenes in the Castellani cycle show the episodes of the Christian making the initial oath on the altar of St Nicholas; the Christian swearing in front of the judge that he had repaid his debt, while the Jew holds his staff; St Nicholas arriving to revive the Christian who has been killed by the cart.

[294] See Cole (1977), esp. pp. 9-17, 78-79; Kaftal (1952), p. 756.

popular scenes from the life of St Nicholas in Byzantine or Italian art.[295] Despite the contrasting contexts and distant locations of these cycles, a comparison is nevertheless instructive. The 2004 New York exhibition, 'Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)', drew attention to the role played by the Franciscans in mediating artistic exchange between Byzantium and Italy.[296] At the time of the foundation of the Franciscan Order, the Byzantine Empire was ruled by Latin emperors following the 1204 sack of Constantinople. This enabled easier access to the Holy Land from the West. The Franciscans, who desired to visit the lands in which Christ had lived and died and who were often sent to the Levant as papal emissaries, took the opportunity to expand their missionary programme by preaching to native orthodox and Saracen populations, as well as to Latin settlers, crusaders and merchants in the East. St Francis himself joined the Fifth Crusade and visited the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the year 1219. The earliest surviving fresco cycle of St Francis anywhere was painted in a Constantinopolitan church, the Kalenderhane Camii, possibly dating to the early 1250s and now preserved in the Archaeological Museum at Istanbul.[297] By the 1260s, the Franciscan Order had built houses on mainland Greece, and was a recognised and influential religious force.

The Franciscans were receptive to the Byzantine art they encountered in the East. They responded especially to eastern iconography and were instrumental in bringing the *vita* panel form to Italy. The earliest surviving dated *vita* panel in Italy, painted in 1235 by Bonaventura Berlinghieri for the church of S. Francesco at Pescia, represents St Francis and his life.[298] When the St Nicholas cycle in the Lower Church at Assisi was painted, the Franciscans were well-

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[295] Of the 56 Byzantine cycles Ševčenko discusses, the episode of the Three Destitute Maidens appears 18 times, the *Thauma de Artemide* story 19 times (specifically the Tree of Plakoma), and scenes from the *Praxis de Stratelates* appear in 30 cycles. Of the 31 cycles and 33 narrative scenes I have identified in Italian art, *The Three Destitute Maidens* is represented 32 times, the *Thauma de Artemide* story (both *The Tree of Plakoma* and *The Nun and the Oil*) 10 times; and the *Praxis de Stratelates* 16 times, making these scenes the first-, sixth- and third-most commonly represented scenes from the life and miracles of St Nicholas in Italy.

[296] See Derbes and Neff (2004), pp. 449-88. The exhibition was held from 23 March to 4 July 2004 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

[297] Derbes and Neff (2004), p. 449. For the establishment of the Franciscan Order in the East, see esp. pp. 449-52.

[298] See Ševčenko (1999), pp. 154-55, fig. 7.

established in the Levant, and strong Byzantine influences can be witnessed in the fresco decoration of the Upper Church. For example, the evangelists painted by Cimabue on the central crossing vault of the Upper Church, originally on gold ground, are suggestive of Byzantine mosaic decoration. A Byzantinesque *Deesis* appears in the central vault of the nave, although with the Franciscan twist of the inclusion of St Francis.[299]

Considering this context, and the role of the Franciscan Order as a further channel for the east-west transition of Byzantine iconography, it is not surprising that the St Nicholas cycle in the Lower Church at Assisi displays a similar assimilation of Byzantine iconography. For example, the scene of *The Three Destitute Maidens* demonstrates a closer iconographical relationship to the same scene in the Thessaloniki cycle than to the earlier Italian scene on the Bisceglie *vita* panel (Figs 2.20, 2.42, 2.43). While this panel also displays a close relationship to the Byzantine St Nicholas iconography, as discussed above, it is unlikely that this panel was a source for the Assisi cycle, and the differences in the scenes of *The Three Destitute Maidens* confirm this. At Assisi, the scene shows St Nicholas reaching through the window of a bedroom at night while the three maidens lie sleeping. In the Thessaloniki scene St Nicholas also reaches towards a bedroom window at night, passing through a bag of gold to the three sleeping maidens and their father. In contrast, on the Bisceglie panel the three maidens are standing awake while St Nicholas reaches over a wall and down to the sleeping father, handing him a bag of gold. The scene of *The Three Destitute Maidens* demonstrates St Nicholas's capacity for charity, an appropriate choice for the Franciscan context of the Assisi cycle.

The similarities in the representation of the scene at Assisi and Thessaloniki suggest that they perhaps share a common Greek visual or literary source. However, the Assisi scene also corresponds to the scene as described in the *Legenda Aurea*: St Nicholas visits the nobleman's house at night and throws a quantity of gold wrapped in cloth through a window; meanwhile the nobleman and his three daughters are sleeping. Further links can be seen between the Assisi St

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[299] For Byzantine influences at Assisi, see Derbes and Neff (2004), pp. 454-56.

Nicholas cycle and the saint's life as presented by Voragine, particularly in the choice of scenes represented. Long cycles of the life of St Nicholas in Italian art normally include scenes of the saint's Birth, Schooling, and Consecration.[300] At Assisi, however, no reference is made to these episodes, and only two events from the saint's lifetime are represented, the Three Destitute Maidens and the *Praxis de Stratelates*; all other events depicted occurred posthumously. The *Legenda Aurea* similarly favours the miraculous, supernatural aspects of the saint's life. In contrast, the cycle at Thessaloniki accentuates the saint's life on earth and his spiritual career by representing three consecration scenes and only one posthumous miracle, the Nun and the Oil.

The prominence of the *Legenda Aurea* in the decades preceding the production of the St Nicholas cycle at Assisi would argue strongly in favour of the text's influence upon the cycle. However, there is a third factor concerning the Assisi cycle which had a much greater impact upon its iconography than either the Byzantine tradition or the Latin hagiography: the cycle's Franciscan context and patronage. Franciscan religious ideology can be witnessed within several of the Assisi scenes, which firmly set the cycle apart from its Byzantine and earlier Italian counterparts.

Scenes from the story of St Nicholas's rescue of Adeodatus are very common in Italian art, much more so than in Byzantine art.[301] In the Assisi *Adeodatus* scene, St Nicholas is represented grabbing the boy by his hair (Fig. 2.44).[302] In the same story as told in the *Legenda*

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[300] Other long cycles include one or more reference to these events in the life of St Nicholas: the Bisceglie panel, as discussed above, includes scenes of his Birth and the Bath miracle, his Schooling, his Selection and Consecration as Bishop. At Pistoia there are scenes of his infancy, and his Selection and Consecration as Bishop. At Vittorio Veneto and Milazzo, the Birth and Bath Miracle are depicted.

[301] On the 31 cycles and 33 narrative scenes I have identified in Italian monumental art, the story of *Adeodatus* is represented 16 times (making it the joint-third most commonly depicted story alongside the *Praxis de Stratelates*, after *The Three Destitute Maidens* and *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*). In contrast, the story of *Adeodatus* (or Basil) is only represented in 6 of the 56 Byzantine cycles, according to Ševčenko (1983).

[302] St Nicholas is also present and grabbing the hair of Adeodatus in the scene of the miracle represented in the church of S. Flaviano at Montefiascone. This fresco cycle contains 4 scenes from the life and miracles of St Nicholas: *The Three Destitute Maidens*, *Adeodatus*, *The Nun and the Oil*, and 1 scene from the *Praxis de Stratelates*, where *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution*. For the frescoes and church, see Tiberia (1987). The story of the *Thauma de Artemide* is misinterpreted here as *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*. See also Van Marle (1925), pp. 15-22.

Aurea, the place of St Nicholas is taken by a gust of wind.[303] The Assisi scene places greater emphasis on the role played by St Nicholas, whose visual presence in the story enhances his intercessionary role. Indeed, in the Assisi representation the saint flies into the scene and swoops down dramatically to grab the boy's hair, in a gesture that dominates the composition. It can be argued that the appearance of St Nicholas in the scene was intended to bring attention to the role of the saint as a protector of children, especially when it is considered that four out of the ten scenes in the Assisi cycle are dedicated to stories that involve St Nicholas rescuing children.[304] Significantly, one of these stories, the miracle of St Nicholas Reviving a Boy Strangled by the Devil, only occurs in one other Italian cycle and does not appear at all in Byzantine art.[305] As discussed above in relation to the Peccioli panel, the protection of children was of great concern in the Middle Ages because of high child mortality rates. This theme is emphasised elsewhere. For example, the church of SS. Annunziata at Ravello has a St Nicholas cycle of only two scenes, both of which are taken from the story of Adeodatus, and in the single figure representations of St Nicholas that occasionally present Adeodatus as an attribute, as discussed above.[306]

The protection of children was evidently a concern for the Franciscans at Assisi, because the theme appears elsewhere in the frescoes of the Lower Church. Firstly, on the north wall of the north transept either side of the entrance to the St Nicholas chapel are two scenes from a miracle of St Francis, attributed to the workshop of Giotto (c.1313). The scenes show St Francis reviving

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[303] 'Et subito facto vento vehementi totamque domum concutiente puer cum scypho rapitur et ante fores ecclesiae, ubi parentes agebant sollemnia, collocatur et magnum gandium omnibus generatur', Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 29.

[304] These are *The Three Destitute Maidens*, 2 scenes of *Adeodatus*, and *St Nicholas Revives a Boy Strangled by the Devil*.

[305] According to the cycles discussed in Ševčenko (1983). In Italian art, this miracle also appears in the Ambrogio Lorenzetti altarpiece painted for the church of S. Procolo, discussed below. This miracle is mentioned in the *Legenda Aurea*, see Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 28. In this story, a father was celebrating the feast of St Nicholas with a sumptuous meal when the devil, dressed as a pilgrim, came to the door to ask for alms. The man ordered his son to take alms to the pilgrim, but the pilgrim had disappeared. The boy followed him to a crossroad, where the disguised devil strangled him. Hearing this, the man brought his son back to the house and demanded to know why this had happened, after all the honour he had paid to St Nicholas. At this moment, the boy opened his eyes, revived by the saint.

[306] For the Ravello cycle, see Kaftal (1965), p. 801. The 14th/15th-century frescoes in the church of Sta Maria del Parto at Sutri, Lazio, also only depicts 1 story from the life of St Nicholas, that of the story of Adeodatus. See Kaftal (1965), p. 812.

a boy from Suessa after he fell from a ruined building.[307] On the adjacent eastern wall of the north transept, a fresco represents a further miracle, in which St Francis resuscitates a child who fell from a balcony in an effort to follow his mother to church.[308] The remainder of the walls and vault of the north transept of the Lower Church are filled with scenes of the Infancy and Crucifixion of Christ. According to Bonaventure's account of the life of St Francis, the *Legenda Maior*, the saint had a 'love of innocent children', and five out of eight of the miracles described involving resuscitation concern children or youths.[309]

The St Nicholas cycle at Assisi further reflects concerns illustrated elsewhere in the Lower Church programmes in another scene, that of *St Nicholas and the Statue* (or *Icon*)-*Beating Jew* (Fig. 2.45). In this scene, a Jew is poised dramatically with a long whip held above his head, ready to strike the icon of St Nicholas that is placed upon an altar. This miracle, mentioned in the lives of St Nicholas by Wace and Voragine, does not appear in the Greek lives of St Nicholas and is consequently absent from Byzantine representations of the life of the saint.[310] This scene is rare in Italian art and only appears in two other cycles (Fig. 2.46).[311] The essence of the story is the conversion of a Jew who assaulted a statue (or icon) of St Nicholas because the saint failed to protect his possessions. The Franciscans were openly intolerant of Jewish settlers in Italy because of their practice of money-lending.[312] Recently, attention has been brought to the multiple representations of Judas in the Passion cycle of the south transept of the Lower Church; Janet

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[307] This miracle is mentioned in the *Legenda Aurea*; see Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 673.

[308] See Hoeniger (2002), p. 316.

[309] See Hoeniger (2002), p. 309. For the *Legenda Maior*, see St Bonaventure, *Legenda maior*, in *Analecta franciscana X: Legendae S. Francisci Assisiensis saeculis XIII et XIV conscriptae* (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1926-46), pp. 555-652.

[310] According to Ševčenko (1983). For St Nicholas and the Statue-Beating Jew, see Wace (1942), p. 16, v. 723-806; p. 15, v. 651-722; Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 27-28. In this story, a Jew who had witnessed St Nicholas's resuscitation of the Cheating Christian, ordered a statue (or icon) of the saint to guard his house and possessions in his absence; if the saint did not, the Jew would beat the statue. When thieves stole his possessions, the Jew did as he had threatened. But during the beating, St Nicholas appeared to the thieves and told them to return the stolen goods so that the beating would stop. Terrified, they returned the goods to the Jew's house, and vowed never to steal again. The Jew converted to Christianity.

[311] The 2 other cycles are those in the churches of S. Giovanni Battista at Vittorio Veneto, north-east Italy, and SS. Nicolò e Cataldo at Lecce, Puglia.

[312] For the Franciscans and the Jews, see Aaron Kirschenbaum, 'Jewish and Christian Theories of Usury in the Middle Ages', *JQR* 75, no. 3, new series (Jan. 1985), esp. pp. 270ff.

Robson has argued that the image of *The Death of Judas* is a warning to the friars, that Judas represented the failed apostle, and also the failed friar, who turned away from Christ and a life of poverty and chose instead wealth and betrayal.[313] Like Judas, the Jew in the St Nicholas cycle was more concerned with the material than the spiritual, and both were presented as bad examples.

The childhood and anti-Semitic emphases of the St Nicholas cycle can, in the wider context of the Lower Church transept, be considered intentional. If indeed the St Nicholas cycle was conceived to be consistent with the transept fresco programmes, this further supports the argument proposed in Chapter One, that St Nicholas was favoured by the Franciscans because he displayed affinity with mendicant spirituality. Through the fresco cycle at Assisi, a relationship between St Nicholas and the Franciscans is created; this is further promoted through the frequent representations of St Nicholas, sometimes alongside St Francis, throughout the Lower Church (Fig. 2.47).[314] The Assisi cycle offers an alternative to the iconography displayed in Byzantine cycles (such as that at Thessaloniki) as traditional scenes are altered and new miracles included, so that the Assisi St Nicholas cycle could display particular Franciscan concerns. Evidently St Nicholas was considered an appropriate saint to express these concerns, indicating that he played an important role for the Franciscan Order.

THE CASTELLANI CYCLE

Later in the fourteenth century, the c.1384 St Nicholas cycle in the Castellani chapel of the church of Sta Croce, Florence, displays more explicitly the concerns of its lay donor. As at Assisi, the Castellani cycle includes the scene of *The Three Destitute Maidens*, echoing the virtue of anonymous charity. Similarly, the Castellani cycle displays concerns of the protection of children

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[313] Robson (2004), p. 51. Robson discusses the importance of Judas and Passion cycles to the Franciscans, and argues for a single iconographic programme for the entire Lower Church at Assisi.

[314] According to the PICA, St Nicholas appears 4 times within the frescoes of the Lower Church: on the entrance arch, the north wall and south wall of the St Nicholas chapel, and in the south transept frescoes.

in the scenes of *The Innkeeper and the Three Pickled Boys*, which will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter, and *The Boy and the Golden Cup*. Similarities between the Castellani and Assisi cycles are to be expected, considering the influence that the Franciscan mother church had over later Franciscan monuments; they are also to be expected because the workshop of Agnolo Gaddi, which was responsible for the Castellani cycle, inherited the workshop of Giotto and would therefore have been familiar with the St Nicholas cycle at Assisi.[315]

The scene of *The Boy and the Golden Cup* demonstrates St Nicholas's powers of resurrection as the saint rescues a boy from drowning at sea (Fig. 2.48). This story is unknown in Byzantine art, but appears in the *Legenda Aurea* and is relatively common in the fourteenth-century Italian fresco cycles.[316] This legend is particularly pertinent for the Franciscan context of the Castellani chapel because it is also a cautionary tale about greed and the dangers of coveting personal possessions. Keeping with this theme, the Castellani cycle includes another new legend to the Latin iconography and hagiography of the life of St Nicholas: the Jew and the Cheating Christian, seen for the first time in the cycle at Udine, discussed below (Figs 2.49, 2.50). Like the story of St Nicholas and the Icon-Beating Jew represented at Assisi, this legend also involves the conversion of a Jew, and is essentially a warning about the consequences of not repaying a debt.[317] The presence of the Jew in the scene corresponds to the Franciscan concern about money-

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[315] See Roberto Longhi, *'Giudizio sul duecento' e ricerche sul trecento nell'Italia centrale. 1939-1979* (Florence: Sansoni, 1974), esp. pp. 55-114.

[316] For example, this story is represented in the fresco cycles at Pistoia, Udine, Lecce, and Vittorio Veneto, and on the late-15th century altarpiece at Milazzo. The story of the Boy and the Golden Cup tells of how a nobleman had prayed to St Nicholas for a son, promising that he would offer a golden cup to the saint's shrine if his prayer was answered. However, when the man had the cup made, he decided to keep it because of its beauty, and ordered another cup of equal value for the saint's shrine. The man then travelled with his son to the shrine of St Nicholas. During the journey, the man asked his son to bring him some water in the first golden cup; when the boy tried, he fell overboard and drowned. Grief-stricken, the father continued to the shrine to fulfil his vow. When he tried to place the first cup upon the altar of St Nicholas, however, an unseen hand kept thrusting the cup from the altar. At this moment, the man's son appeared, carrying the first cup in his hands. He explained how when he fell into the water, St Nicholas had plucked him out and kept him safe. The overjoyed father then offered both gold cups to St Nicholas in gratitude. See Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 28-29.

[317] In the story of the Jew and the Cheating Christian, a Christian borrowed money from a Jew, making an oath on an altar of St Nicholas that he would repay the money as soon as possible. Because he did not, the Jew demanded his money, but the Christian claimed that he had repaid it. The Christian thus appeared

lending and usury, which the Jews practiced widely in medieval Italian communes.[318] The story of the Jew and the Cheating Christian appears in the Latin hagiography of St Nicholas, but neither in the Greek lives of the saint nor in Byzantine art; surviving representations of the scene in Italian art are also relatively rare, appearing in only three cycles.[319] The association of St Nicholas with Jews and money-lending is therefore a specifically Italian development within the cult of the saint. As a result of this association, St Nicholas became the patron of pawnbrokers and bankers in Italy, a role that he does not play in the Orthodox East.

The warnings contained within the scenes of *The Boy and the Golden Cup* and *The Jew and the Cheating Christian* could have been made intentionally on behalf of the chapel's donor, the banker Michele Castellani. Alongside the St Nicholas cycle, the Castellani chapel also displays cycles from the lives of other saints, St John the Baptist (on the right altar bay and right altar wall), St John the Evangelist (on the left entrance-bay lunette) and St Anthony Abbot (on the left altar bay and left altar wall). Bruce Cole has identified that the particular scenes represented in these cycles, as well as those in the St Nicholas cycle, show consistent concerns with money and the renunciation of worldly possessions.[320] For example, the cycles include scenes of St Anthony Abbot distributing his fortune in alms and retreating into the desert, St John the Baptist wandering into the wilderness, and St John the Evangelist during his exile on Patmos.

As part of the general fresco programme in the Castellani chapel, the St Nicholas scenes were therefore selected because they are consistent with the message intended by the donor. The

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before a judge and swore that he had paid his debt; however, the man had put the money he owed in a hollow staff, which he had handed to the Jew before he swore that he had repaid his debt, then took the staff back from the Jew. On his way home, the dishonest Christian was killed by a speeding cart, and his staff was broken, revealing the hidden money. When he heard of this, the Jew understood the trick that had been played on him, but he refused to collect his money unless the Christian was restored to life by St Nicholas, in which case he would convert to Christianity. When the saint obliged, the Jew kept his word.

[318] For the role of Jewish money-lenders in medieval Italian society, see Maristella Botticini, 'A Tale of "Benevolent" Governments: Private Credit Markets, Public Finance, and the Role of Jewish Lenders in Medieval and Renaissance Italy', *JEH* 60, no. 1 (Mar. 2000), pp. 164-89.

[319] Besides the Castellani and Udine cycles, I have only identified 1 other representation of this scene in Italian art, in the fresco cycle at Vittorio Veneto, discussed below. For the story, see Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 27.

[320] Cole (1977), pp. 78-79.

scenes did not just reflect Franciscan concerns, but were designed to give caution and advice to all its viewers, who in all probability were involved with borrowing money.[321] In the scene of *The Three Destitute Maidens*, the St Nicholas cycle also demonstrates that good deeds could be achieved though donating money charitably, as the saint does to the father of the maidens (Fig. 2.51). Such messages would have helped to create a reputation for the banker as an honest and pious man. Incidentally, the need to provide dowries was a common cause of concern for medieval Italian families, and a frequent reason for Christians to turn to Jewish money-lenders;[322] this scene could perhaps be suggesting that the viewer have religious faith in times of adversity, and not resort to the sinful act of borrowing money from Jewish lenders.

The St Nicholas cycle in the Castellani chapel displays a greater number of scenes from the new Latin miracles of the saint, than from the stories that were brought to Italy by the Greek hagiography. The reasons for this could be many: they may have been considered appropriate for the message that the donor wished to communicate as part of the general messages within the chapel programme, or perhaps the donor wanted to show his awareness of the new hagiographical developments within the cult of his chosen saint. It is therefore interesting that the cycle also includes a scene from the *Praxis de Stratelates*. Perhaps this scene is present because it is one of the most commonly represented episodes from the life of St Nicholas, in both Byzantine and Italian art, therefore ensuring that the saint within the Castellani cycle was recognisable as St Nicholas. In a cycle where new iconography is so dominant, older and well-known scenes would have been vital so that the viewer could still identify with the stories depicted, and so that the donor's association with this popular saint was not missed. This cycle demonstrates that the

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[321] In late-medieval Tuscany, Jewish lending involved all levels of society: it enabled poor households to smooth consumption, wealthy merchants to purchase working capital, and all households to provide dowries for their daughters. During times of hardship, such as war, plague or famine, Italian town governments also turned to Jewish lenders to finance grain subsidies. See Botticini (2000), p. 166.

[322] Botticini (2000), p. 166. For the issues surrounding dowries, see for example Catherine Atkinson, *Debts, Dowries, Donkeys: The Diary of Niccolò Machiavelli's Father, Messer Bernardo, in Quattrocento Florence* (Frankfurt, London: Peter Lang, 2002). When discussing the marriage of his daughter, Bernardo Machiavelli focused on the long, drawn-out negotiations concerning her dowry, and his attempts to reach a compromise because he could not afford what was expected.

Byzantine cycles and the original stories from the Greek texts still had a role within the new Italian cycles.

Like the Peccioli panel, the Castellani cycle is another example of how a St Nicholas cycle could be manipulated to portray particular messages on behalf of the donor. St Nicholas, as he is represented in this cycle, effectively symbolises the patron and the virtues he either wished to possess, or wanted others to believe he possessed. In the two Franciscan cycles discussed in this case study, new iconography is introduced to the St Nicholas cycle which illustrates specifically Franciscan concerns. Rather than encourage strong Byzantine resonances within the saint's iconography (which might be expected considering the Franciscans' role in artistic exchange between Italy and the East), the Franciscans in fact brought innovation to the cycle, demonstrating that the iconography of St Nicholas could be updated to reflect contemporary Italian concerns. The ability to achieve this indicates that by the early-fourteenth century, through promotion by the Franciscan Order the life of St Nicholas had become accepted and integrated into Italian religious life. This strengthens the argument that the saint's iconography reflected the more general trends of Latinisation within the saint's cult, as discussed in Chapter One.

CASE STUDY THREE: NORTH-EASTERN ITALIAN FRESCO CYCLES

This case study will examine two fourteenth-century fresco cycles from the cluster located in north-east Italy, in the towns of Udine and Bolzano. The recently restored Udine cycle is located on the south wall of the chapel of St Nicholas, situated to the north of the main apse behind the transept of the town's cathedral. The cycle was painted in 1348 by Vitale da Bologna,[323] predating the Castellani cycle. The Bolzano cycle, also restored in the last century, is located on the north wall of the single-nave chapel of S. Giovanni, an annex of the church of S.

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[323] For the chapel and frescoes, see Cesare Gnudi and Paolo Casadio, *Itinerari di Vitale da Bologna. Affreschi a Udine e a Pomposa* (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 29 Sept.-11 Nov. 1990).

Domenico.[324] The date of this cycle is unknown, and suggestions vary from the beginning to the close of the fourteenth century.[325] It is not known, therefore, if the cycle at Bolzano predates either the Udine or Castellani cycles. While these cycles share concerns displayed in the central Italian cycles, they are significant because they present themes and messages that are particular to this group and not discernable elsewhere in Italian art.

This study will also discuss a cycle dated to the early-fifteenth century, that of the Galletti chapel in the Cistercian church of S. Giovanni Battista at Vittorio Veneto, located roughly mid-way between Udine and Bolzano.[326] This cycle is attributed by Kaftal to Jacobello del Fiore, although this is unlikely.[327] This cycle echoes the themes of the Udine and Bolzano cycles, showing that the cycle at Vittorio Veneto was receptive to local iconographical innovations; it also, however, picks up on the concerns portrayed in the central Italian fresco cycles, demonstrating that these concerns could apply outside a Franciscan context. The Vittorio Veneto cycle represents a mature 'Italian' cycle, which nevertheless does not dismiss the eastern origins of the cult of St Nicholas.

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[324] For the cycle at Bolzano, see Roberto Salvini, 'Un ciclo di affreschi trecenteschi a Bolzano', *RRIA* 8 (1941), pp. 228-55; Kaftal (1978), pp. 764-74.

[325] See Salvini (1941), p. 228. Salvini discusses previous scholars who have dated the cycle to between 1350 and 1400. Also, it is noted that the black and white stripes on the clothing of the maidens from the scene of *The Three Destitute Maidens* resembles the coat of arms of the Bocci, a banking family from Florence who moved to Bolzano at the start of the 14th century, suggesting that the cycle should be dated to this time, and possibly attributed to the workshop of Giotto. However, Lillian Ray Martin dates the cycle to c.1330-40, in *The Art and Archaeology of Venetian Ships and Boats* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press; London: Chatham, 2001), p. 91.

[326] For the church and the cycle, see Bruno Paiutta, *La chiesa di S. Giovanni Battista a Vittorio Veneto* (Vittorio Veneto: La Vittoriese, 1957), as in Kaftal (1978), p. 773.

[327] Kaftal (1978), p. 764. Kaftal attributes the cycle to Jacobello del Fiore, but questioningly. Jacobello del Fiore was present at Ceneda (later Vittorio Veneto) in 1432, when he painted an altarpiece for the bishop, now preserved at the Accademia, Venice. However, the crude, almost cartoon style of the frescoes at the Galletti chapel suggest a far less skilled painter. For Jacobello del Fiore at Ceneda, see Michelangelo Muraro, 'Affreschi di Nicolò di Pietro e di Jacobello del Fiore a Serravalle', *Rivista d'Arte* 30 (1955), p. 173.

BOLZANO AND UDINE

Although not displayed in Franciscan establishments, the Bolzano and Udine cycles represent scenes from the life of St Nicholas that share the concerns displayed in the Castellani and Assisi cycles. At Bolzano, eight episodes from the life of St Nicholas are depicted, including *The Three Destitute Maidens*; the *Praxis de Stratelates*; *The Death of St Nicholas*; *The Funeral of St Nicholas*; *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm* and two scenes of *Adeodatus*.[328] In the chapel of St Nicholas at the cathedral of Udine, the fresco cycle includes the following six scenes: *The Death* and *The Funeral of St Nicholas*; *The Jew and the Cheating Christian*; two scenes of *The Boy and the Golden Cup*,[329] and two scenes of *The Innkeeper and the Salted Salesman*.[330] Both cycles, therefore, contain miracles in which St Nicholas rescues children, also seen at Assisi and in the Castellani chapel: the story of *Adeodatus* at Bolzano, and *The Boy and the Golden Cup* and *The Innkeeper and the Salted Salesman* at Udine (Figs 2.52-2.54). The Bolzano cycle also includes *The Three Destitute Maidens* as seen at Assisi, and the Udine cycle contains the episode of *The Jew and the Cheating Christian*, seen later in the Castellani cycle (Figs 2.50, 2.55).

As discussed in Chapter One, the scene of *The Innkeeper and the Three Pickled Boys*, or in the case of Udine, the *Salted Salesman*, is an innovation of the Latin hagiography of St Nicholas.[331] While the pickled boys became an attribute of St Nicholas, as mentioned in the Prologue above, the scene is relatively rare in Italian art.[332] Discrepancies within the iconography

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[328] For the cycle, see Salvini (1941), pp. 228-55. Salvini claims there are 8 episodes in the St Nicholas cycle, although Kaftal only mentions 7 (see Kaftal [1978], pp. 764-73). The 7 scenes listed above in the text are those mentioned by Kaftal. While Salvini references 8 scenes, he only identifies 5: *The Three Destitute Maidens*, the *Praxis de Stratelates*, *The Death of St Nicholas*, *The Funeral of St Nicholas*, and *The Miracle of St Nicholas Saving a Child Lost at Sea*. The latter is a misidentification of the scene of *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*. The final 3 scenes are just referred to as 'miracle of St Nicholas'. 2 of these scenes are those representing Adeodatus; the last scene is unknown.

[329] The 2 scenes represent the boy falling overboard, and St Nicholas returning the boy to his father.

[330] The scenes represented show the innkeeper pickling the man, and St Nicholas resuscitating the man.

[331] This story is first apparent in the life by Wace, see p. 28, fn. 26, 27, above. This legend is not mentioned in the *Legenda Aurea.* Just as the legends differ in the number and identity of those pickled, so does the iconography.

[332] The story of the Innkeeper and the Pickled Boy (or Boys) appears in 6 monumental cycles and 2 individual narrative scenes. The cycles are: Udine; Vittorio Veneto; the Castellani chapel; the Quaratesi,

and composition of this scene within the Udine and Castellani cycles indicate that the earlier northern-Italian scene was not a model for the scene depicted in the Castellani chapel. In the latter scene, for example, St Nicholas stands before the kneeling innkeeper, his wife and three wooden barrels in which three naked boys are standing and gesturing towards the saint (Fig. 2.56). At Udine, the innkeeper is first seen pickling the boys to the left of the scene, then St Nicholas is depicted resurrecting just one male figure in the presence of the innkeeper (Fig. 2.54). These inconsistencies suggest the availability of many different visual sources for artists depicting the life of St Nicholas. They also indicate that the iconography of the new Latin miracles of the saint were not yet refined; just as the single figure representations of St Nicholas discussed in the prologue underwent a search for new episcopal clothing and a new attribute for the saint, so too did the scenes of the newly-introduced miracles also experience a similar refining process.

A main theme of the story of the Innkeeper and the Three Pickled Boys, first seen in representations of the life of St Nicholas in the fourteenth century, signifies a general development within the saint's hagiography and iconography. This theme is resurrection, and is present in all of the episodes from the life of St Nicholas represented in the cycle at Udine. In the story of the Boy and the Golden Cup, St Nicholas brings a boy back to life after he drowns chasing the cup he drops into the sea. As mentioned above, this story is unknown in Byzantine art, but appears in the *Legenda Aurea* and in other fourteenth-century Italian fresco cycles.[333] The theme of resurrection is also present in the story of Jew and the Cheating Christian: although this part of the story is not represented in the cycle at Udine, St Nicholas revives the Jew after he is killed by a cart. In the scene of *The Death* and *The Funeral of St Nicholas*, rather than concentrating on the moment of death as is typical in Byzantine art, including the Sinai panel,[334]

Casa Buonarroti and Ottana altarpieces. The narrative scenes are both at Varese, in the baptistery and in the church of S. Donato.

[333] See p. 101, fn. 316, above. For the story in the *Legenda Aurea*, see Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 28-29.

[334] Of the 56 Byzantine cycles discussed by Ševčenko, 20 depict the Death of St Nicholas, but none show his Funeral or his Soul Ascending to Heaven. The Death of St Nicholas is represented in 4 Italian cycles, the fresco cycles at Udine and Bolzano, and the altarpiece cycles at Ottana and S. Domenico, Perugia. The

at Udine the focus is upon the saint's glorious assumption to heaven (Figs 2.57, 2.58). According to the *Legenda Aurea*, 'When the Lord wished to call Nicholas to himself, the saint prayed that he would send his angels', and as the saint died, he recited a psalm, 'Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.'[335] In the Udine fresco, the soul of St Nicholas can be seen carried upwards by angels towards Christ. The focus of the scene is diverted away from the solemn event of the saint's death, towards his victory over sin and subsequent resurrection in heaven in the company of Christ. The viewer can also witness the soul of St Nicholas approaching Christ, confirming that the saint will be a powerful intercessor.

The relationship between the scene of the assumption of the soul of St Nicholas in the Udine cycle, and the episode as described in the *Legenda Aurea*, suggests that this text may have been the source for the representation of the scene at Udine. The theme of resurrection is not prominent in the earlier hagiographical tradition of St Nicholas. Existing stories from the Greek and Latin lives of the saint that concern either children's or men's wellbeing generally focus upon dramatic rescues, for example the tales of Adeodatus and the *Praxis de Stratelates*, and St Nicholas saving sailors during storms. In the Greek lives, St Nicholas rescues children from drowning but does not perform resuscitations. The prominence of the theme of resurrection within the *Legenda Aurea* and the fourteenth-century fresco cycles indicates that the saint was, at this time, called upon to respond to a particular need that he was not previously associated with in either the East or the Latin West. This development is important because it shows that the cult of St Nicholas was adaptable to the needs of its Italian audience, and that its iconography could be updated to reflect this.

The Udine cycle provides another example of how an episode from the life of St Nicholas could portray alternative messages. In the Castellani cycle, the scenes of *The Boy and the Golden*

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saint's funeral is represented in the Udine and Bolzano cycles only. In the Udine cycle, the Death and Funeral are represented in the same scene.

[335] 'Cum autem dominus vellet eum assumere, rogavit dominum, in tangelos suos sibi mitteret, et inclinato capite angelos ad se venire vidit et dicto psalmo: in te domine speravi usque, in manus tuas', Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 26. The English translation is from Ryan (1993), p. 25.

Cup warn about the dangers of greed; at Udine the scene was probably chosen because it shows St Nicholas's powers of resurrection. Money and resurrection are the major themes of these two cycles; the first is concerned with warning against particular actions during one's lifetime, the other celebrates the supernatural, intercessory powers of the saint. That such different concerns can be discerned from one single episode of St Nicholas's life demonstrates the diversity and adaptability of both the saint's personality, and of the iconography associated with his cult in Italy.

The Bolzano and Udine cycles share a dominant theme that makes them unique within the corpus of St Nicholas cycles and narrative scenes in Italian art. The scene of *The Funeral of St Nicholas*, present at both Bolzano and Udine, is not represented elsewhere in Italian art, and is not present at all in Byzantine representations of the saint's life.[336] The emphasis upon the death of St Nicholas gives the Bolzano and Udine cycles an additional element of mortality, a contrast to the supernatural aspect of the saint's life emphasised at Udine. At Bolzano, death appears to be an important theme within the fresco programme as a whole, as adjacent to the scene of *The Death of St Nicholas* is a representation of *The Triumph over Death*.[337] In these St Nicholas scenes, the viewer is reminded that the saint was once human, and had also lived and died. In a crypt at Castelbadia, just north-east of Bolzano, a further scene survives which also demonstrates a concern with the human aspect of the saint. Dated to the thirteenth century, this damaged fresco represents St Nicholas refusing to take his mother's milk, one of the most intimate scenes from the saint's life.[338] This early miracle is described in some Greek texts as well as the *Legenda Aurea*, which give varying accounts about the specific days on which the infant St Nicholas

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[336] The Quaratesi altarpiece, painted in 1425 by Gentile da Fabriano, includes a representation of the Miracle of the Tomb of St Nicholas, but not the saint's Death or Funeral. This altarpiece will be discussed below.

[337] For details of the fresco programme as a whole in the S. Giovanni chapel, see Salvini (1941).

[338] See Kaftal (1978), p. 765. Kaftal records that this fresco is unpublished, and does not provide bibliographic details, or further information about the crypt.

would allow himself to be fed.[339] This scene is not once represented in surviving Byzantine art, and is rare in the West: I have identified only a handful in Italian art, in any medium.[340] The depiction of this particular miracle emphasises the relationship of the saint to his mother, and just as the viewers of the Bolzano and Udine cycles are reminded that the saint died, the audience of the breast miracle scenes are informed that the saint was once an infant who was dependent upon his mother for nurture. This promotion of the human side of St Nicholas, in contrast to the supernatural aspect of his miracle-working personality, suggests the desire for a saint that contemporary viewers could relate to on a mortal level, a need which the cult of St Nicholas was able to fulfil.

The Udine cycle is of great importance for the iconographical development of the life of St Nicholas, because it is the earliest surviving cycle containing stories that are unique to the saint's Latin hagiography, and are not present in the Greek texts or in Byzantine art. Additionally, the Udine cycle is the only surviving Italian cycle that does not contain a scene from the miracle of the *Praxis de Stratelates*. The cycle therefore represents a fully 'Italian' cycle of the life of St Nicholas, illustrating the significant changes that the saint's hagiography and iconography underwent in the Middle Ages. The absence of scenes from the *Praxis de Stratelates*, and indeed other popular scenes such as *The Three Destitute Maidens* and *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*, suggests that by the mid-fourteenth century the new iconography of St Nicholas was recognisable and the older, familiar scenes could be omitted.

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[339] According to Ševčenko, these include the *Encomium Methodii*, the *Vita Compilata*, the *Encomium Neophyti*, and the *Vita per Metaphrasten*. The texts differ about the details; see Ševčenko (1983), pp. 67-68. See also Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 22.

[340] Besides the crypt at Castelbadia, this scene is also represented on an agate cameo of southern-Italian provenance, dated to the 13th century, and as part of an 11th-century fresco cycle of the life of St Nicholas in the S. Eldrado chapel of the Abbey of Novalesa, north-west Italy. The chapel of S. Eldrado was decorated with a series of scenes from the life and miracles of St Nicholas in response to the abbey receiving a gift of a relic of the saint's phalanx from the church of S. Nicola at Bari. See Bacci, ed. (2006), p. 286 and p. 25, respectively. The iconography also appears on a 12th-century sculpted column from the monastery of S. Gabriele at S. Bartolomeo, now in the Museo Diocesano at Ancona: see Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 302, 327-28. The PICA also mentions a late-12th century sculpted column at the Museo Manbrini, Galeata, from the Monastery of S. Ellero, Galeata.

VITTORIO VENETO

The Galletti chapel in the church of S. Giovanni Battista at Vittorio Veneto contains an extensive fresco cycle of the life and miracles of St Nicholas.[341] Dated to the early-fifteenth century, the cycle contains the following twelve scenes: *The Birth of St Nicholas*, *The Three Destitute Maidens*, *St Nicholas Exorcises a Young Man*, *The Tree of Plakoma*, *The Nun and the Oil*, *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution* from the *Praxis de Stratelates*, *The Miracle of the Tomb*, *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*, *The Jew and the Cheating Christian*, *St Nicholas and the Statue-Beating Jew*, the story of *Adeodatus*, and *The Boy and the Golden Cup*.

The theme of death, prominent in the Udine and Bolzano cycles, is picked up again at Vittorio Veneto. Here, a scene is included of *The Miracle of the Tomb* of St Nicholas, which dripped a sweet-smelling oil that famously had healing powers (Fig. 2.59). This scene only appears in one other Italian example.[342] According to the *Legenda Aurea*, 'Nicholas was buried in a marble tomb, and a fountain of oil began to flow from his head and a fountain of water from his feet. Even today a holy oil issues from his members and brings health to many.'[343] This event is absent from the Greek lives and only depicted in one Byzantine cycle.[344] The Death of St Nicholas is not represented, however, suggesting that the emphasis of the cycle at Vittorio Veneto is again on the miraculous acts of the saint. Nevertheless, this cycle is perhaps the most complete cycle of the life of St Nicholas which survives: it includes the saint's Birth and early miracles, his tomb, and a selection of well-known posthumous miracles, devoting an equal number of scenes to

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[341] For the church and the cycle, see Paiutta (1957), as in Kaftal (1978), p. 773. I have not been able to access Paiutta's publication. Information about the church, built in 1357, can be found at: http://www.comune.vittorio-veneto.tv.it/ Informazioni/Guida/Guida_2.html (consulted 01/10/09).

[342] The scene is represented on the predella from the 1425 Quaratesi altarpiece, painted by Gentile da Fabriano for the church of S. Niccolò at the gate of Miniato, Florence. This will be discussed below.

[343] 'Qui dum sepultus fuisset in tumba marmoreal, a capite fons olei et a pedibus fons aquae profluxit et usque hodie ex ejus membris sacrum resudat oleum valens in salutem multorum', Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 26; the English translation is from Ryan (1993), p. 25. Voragine's source for these details is thought to be the *De translatione sanctissimi Nicholai archiepiscopi*, a Latin text that often accompanied the life of the saint; the specific source for the *Legenda Aurea* is thought to be the translation account contained within the manuscript at Paris, mentioned above, p. 26, fn. 13. See Boureau, et al (2004), p. 1076, fn. 10.

[344] The Kakopetria icon: see Ševčenko (1983), p. 142.

events taking place during and after the saint's lifetime. This cycle invites caution against assuming an intended meaning behind the choice of scenes represented in the St Nicholas cycles; the criteria could simply be a desire to represent a complete picture of the saint's life, as seen for example, in the *Legenda Aurea*.

Nevertheless, interesting points regarding the development of the iconography of St Nicholas can be drawn from the Vittorio Veneto cycle. For example, this cycle is the only surviving case in which both stories concerning the conversion of Jews – *The Jew and the Cheating Christian* and *St Nicholas and the Icon-Beating Jew* – are present (Figs 2.46, 2.60). The inclusion of these episodes indicates that these stories were considered relevant outside a Franciscan context and that, as seen at Udine, these stories had become an established part of the saint's iconography by the early-fifteenth century. Furthermore, the fact that these scenes were repeated confirms the authority of the Latin hagiographical tradition of St Nicholas.

The Vittorio Veneto cycle is interesting because despite the prominence of the new, Latin scenes, the cycle also contains a selection of episodes from the Greek lives. The fresco cycle at Udine displays an entirely Latinised iconography of St Nicholas; the Vittorio Veneto cycle, however, indicates that this development did not become standard. This cycle includes scenes that are less frequent in Italian art, and one particular scene from the Greek hagiography that is not represented anywhere else in Italian art: *St Nicholas Exorcises a Young Man* (Fig. 2.61).[345] As discussed earlier, dispelling demons and driving away heresy was not a particular concern in the early Latin hagiography of St Nicholas as it was in the Greek lives. For this reason the story of the Tree of Plakoma, in which St Nicholas dispels a demon from a tree, was more common in Byzantine art. The subsequent episode of the Nun and the Oil, however, was less frequently depicted than in Italian art because it addressed different concerns. The Vittorio Veneto cycle displays both episodes of this story, suggesting again a desire to provide a more complete picture

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[345] In Byzantine art, St Nicholas is seen heeling a demoniac in 6 Byzantine cycles. The story can be found in the *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*, the *Vita Compilata*, and the *Vita Lycio-Alexandrina* (Βίος καὶ θαύματα τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ θαυματουργού Νικολάου) (Anrich [1913-17], vol. 1, pp. 303-04).

of the life of St Nicholas, rather than a selection of particular scenes chosen to portray a specific message.

In summary, the fresco cycles discussed in this case study provide evidence of significant iconographical developments that occurred within the iconography of St Nicholas in Italian art in the fourteenth century. New events were depicted, illustrating concerns that are not evident in earlier Italian cycles or in the saint's life represented in Byzantine art, in particular the conversion of Jews. The newly-introduced iconography allowed the cycles to appeal to specific groups, for example Franciscans at Assisi and the banker who patronised the Castellani cycle. The frescoes also demonstrate a close relationship to the saint's hagiography, depicting specifically Latin miracles that are described in the *Legenda Aurea*. However, the cycles also include the more obscure scene of *The Innkeeper and the Three Pickled Boys*, showing that while the *Legenda Aurea* was authoritative, other literary legends could still influence the St Nicholas iconography. The fourteenth-century fresco cycles demonstrate that the iconography of St Nicholas was no longer constrained by the established tradition of the saint's life. The Bisceglie panel subtly alters the traditional iconography of St Nicholas to reflect different concerns; the fresco cycles, however, include entirely new episodes that reflected the saint's new Italian context. In the Vittorio Veneto cycle, the saint's eastern and western roles were united; at Udine, on the other hand, no reference to the saint's origin is made, and a purely Latin hagiographic and iconographic tradition had emerged.

However, the Vittorio Veneto cycle demonstrates the variety available for the St Nicholas cycles, and indicates that despite the introduction of new miracles to the saint's iconography, the prominence given to these stories, as seen in the Udine cycle, should not be considered a general development within the saint's iconography. The cycle at Vittorio Veneto shows that illustrations of both the orthodox and Latin hagiographical traditions of St Nicholas could be combined, and that the old themes and Greek hagiography were still relevant and important, even as new iconography was introduced and became established.

CASE STUDY FOUR: FOURTEENTH- AND FIFTEENTH-CENTURY PREDELLA CYCLES AND NARRATIVE SCENES

The final case study in this chapter will look at a selection of cycles and narrative scenes of the life of St Nicholas that appear on altarpieces and altarpiece predellas. I have identified thirty-five examples which survive from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; only three are dated earlier.[346] Like the fresco cycles, these panels fall into distinct location groupings: the majority were painted by artists or for churches in Tuscany and central Italy, although others survive from Venice and Sicily.[347] The Tuscan predella panels from the fourteenth century constitute the largest group within the corpus of art discussed in this chapter, and will be the focus of this final section. The predella cycles are much shorter than the fresco cycles discussed above, and spatial limitations were an influential factor in the further development of the iconography of St Nicholas in Italy at this time.

The earliest of the predella cycles that survives is a triptych painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti, c.1327-32, for the church of S. Procolo in Florence, now in the Uffizi Galleries.[348] As with all the cycles discussed in this chapter, the combination of scenes represented is unique: *The Three Destitute Maidens*, *St Nicholas is Consecrated as Bishop*, *St Nicholas Revives a Boy Strangled by the Devil*, and *The Miracle of the Corn Ships*. These four scenes cover many aspects of the saint's life, including an early miracle, his church career, a sea miracle and his rescue of a child. The scene of *St Nicholas is Consecrated as Bishop* is perhaps the most important aspect of this cycle in terms of the iconographical development of the cult of St Nicholas in Italy, and emphasises a point made in the prologue above (Fig. 2.62). In the scene, St Nicholas is being ordained as a western bishop: he is wearing a cope, and to his sides stand mitred bishops holding crosiers. The act that defined the saint's ecclesiastical role during his lifetime in the Orthodox

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[346] These are the Margarito of Arezzo, Bisceglie and Peccioli panels, all discussed above. For the remaining narrative scenes and cycles represented on altarpieces, see pp. 75-77, above.

[347] The Venetian altarpieces will be discussed in Chapter 4.

[348] For the altarpiece, see Enzo Carli, *Ambrogio Lorenzetti, dipinti su tavola* (Milan: A. Martello, 1962), page numbers not included.

East, his consecration as bishop, here takes place within a Latin setting, effectively re-establishing the location of his acts and identity to the Latin West. This scene demonstrates that by the mid-fourteenth century St Nicholas was not just represented as a western bishop, but his role was now understood in a Latin context: St Nicholas was a western bishop, and his previous orthodox identity is overlooked.

However, the representation of *The Miracle of the Corn Ships* contains an interesting detail which could be interpreted as an indicator of St Nicholas's eastern origins (Fig. 2.63). This scene is only represented in one other Italian cycle,[349] and in this case is rendered with many technical details. For example, the merchants aboard a large vessel in the foreground can be seen unloading grain, via a chute, into a smaller boat ready to be brought to the shore, where St Nicholas awaits. In the sky, hovering above the ships, two angels refill the larger vessel from enormous grain sacks.[350] The larger grain vessels are anchored, and their mainsails are tightly secured, as they should be so that the boats remain stable so close to the shore. The sterns of the grain vessels face the shore and prominently display coats of arms. Of particular interest to this study is the large white flag sailing above the left-hand grain ship depicting a double-headed eagle. This heraldic symbol was used by both the Holy Roman and Byzantine Empires.[351] Because the merchants in this miracle were taking the grain to Constantinople, and because the miracle takes place within the Eastern Empire, the flag is likely to represent Byzantine heraldry. The details in the scene are consistent with the miracle as described in the *Legenda Aurea*, which states that the ships were anchored in the harbour, that St Nicholas met the merchants there to ask them to spare some grain, and that the merchants were transporting corn for the granaries of the

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[349] The Miracle of the Corn Ships is also represented on the altarpiece by Fra Angelico painted for the St Nicholas chapel of the church of S. Domenico, Perugia, discussed below.

[350] For the story, see p. 6, fn. 24, above.

[351] Alexander P. Kazhdan, et al, eds, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), vol. 1, p. 472. I have not been able to identify the coat of arms on the other ship.

Byzantine emperor.[352] The detail of the Byzantine heraldry is a reminder that St Nicholas lived in the Byzantine East, a point that becomes increasingly ignored in the later medieval Italian cycles.

The Lorenzetti predella cycle represents another rare scene from the life of St Nicholas, namely *St Nicholas Revives a Boy Strangled by the Devil*. This scene only appears elsewhere in the fresco cycle at Assisi (Figs 2.64, 2.65). The proximity of these two cycles, in terms of both date and location, might suggest a close iconographical relationship between them. Additionally, a link between the two cycles was created by Ambrogio's brother, Pietro Lorenzetti, who painted a Passion cycle in the Lower Church at Assisi at around the time that the St Nicholas cycle was produced.[353] However, the two scenes share no compositional or iconographical similarities. At Assisi, the scene contains only four figures: St Nicholas pulls the young boy to his feet after he is revived, while his father is comforted by the boy's mother as he stands behind looking down at his son in concern. On the Lorenzetti predella the miracle is recounted in great detail, depicting a full narrative of the story set just outside and within an architectural setting. The narrative follows the flow of the architecture: in the top-right hand corner a feast is interrupted by a knock at the door. The young boy answers the door and sees a peasant who, once the boy is outside at the top of the staircase, reveals himself to be a demon. At the foot of the staircase, in the bottom-left hand corner of the scene, the devil can be seen strangling the boy, who is dramatically lifted off his feet. In the final scene, the boy is laid on a bed in the bottom-right hand corner, while from the top-left of the scene St Nicholas sends a healing blessing, in the form of two rays, through the window of the lower room. Two other figures gesture towards St Nicholas: a woman at the foot of the bed, and a monk, who draws his hands back in awe. This miracle is illustrated with a great deal of action and emotion, and the scene is dramatically spliced by the two rays, drawing attention to the healing powers of the saint.

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[352] Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 24.

[353] For the Passion cycle in the Lower Church at Assisi, see Robson (2004), and Anne Derbes, *Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy: Narrative Painting, Franciscan Ideologies, and the Levant* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

The representation of this scene is generally faithful to the details of the event that are described in the *Legenda Aurea*. For example, the text tells how the devil, dressed as a pilgrim, knocked at the door asking for alms, and that after the boy was strangled his father laid him on a bed from where he opened his eyes and rose, as he is seen to be doing on the predella panel.[354] There is one great inconsistency, however: the *Legenda Aurea* states that the boy did not find the pilgrim at the door to his house but instead followed him to a crossroad, where the demon revealed himself and strangled him. In the predella representation, this occurs at the staircase leading to the door of the house. This manipulation of the events described could indicate an alternative visual or literary source for the scene; it also demonstrates a way of handling restricted space. The architectural setting of the scene allows all events from the miracle to be illustrated, but within one scene rather than many, as was common for complex narratives in the longer cycles.[355]

This narrative device poses an interesting question that was touched upon earlier in the discussion of the Bisceglie and Peccioli panels, but which is particularly pertinent to altarpiece predellas: what happens when space for the cycle is limited? The solution displayed in the Lorenzetti cycle can also be seen in the predella cycle from a later altarpiece painted by Fra Angelico for the St Nicholas chapel of the church of S. Domenico, Perugia, finished in 1437 (Fig. 2.66).[356] This predella contains three individual panels corresponding to the divisions of the top half of the altarpiece, but actually represents six different events from the life and miracles of St Nicholas. In the panel to the left are three stories from the early part of the saint's life: in a building to the left is *The Birth and Bath Miracle*, and on the right *The Three Destitute Maidens*, while in the street between the two buildings *St Nicholas Preaches to a Crowd* (Fig. 2.67). Again,

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[354] Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 28.

[355] Many longer cycles represent more than 1 episode from a St Nicholas legend, over 2 or more scenes. See for example the *Praxis de Stratelates* scenes on the Bisceglie panel.

[356] For the panel, see Pietro Scarpellini, 'Il polittico Guidalotti del Beato Angelico', in *La basilica di San Domenico di Perugia*, eds Giuseppe R.C. de Yoldi and Giulio Ser-Giacomi (Perugia: Quattroemme, 2006), pp. 491-502.

the events are self-contained and divided by architecture. In the middle panel, *The Miracle of the Corn Ships* occupies most of the composition, with the boats of grain anchored in the background while St Nicholas talks to the merchants on the shore in the foreground (Fig. 2.68). To the right of the panel is a scene of *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*, which is separated from the first scene by mountains. The sea and sky also change colour and become animated to reflect the storm. In the final panel, *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution* from the *Praxis de Stratelates* miracle appears on the left-hand side of the scene, while the right is the setting for *The Death of St Nicholas*, where the saint's soul is carried upwards by angels (Fig. 2.69). Other cycles also incorporate multiple events into one scene, but these usually involve several stages of the same event, like on the Lorenzetti altarpiece, rather than different events or miracles. At Assisi, for example, two scenes from the *Praxis de Stratelates* (*St Nicholas Appears to Emperor Constantine* and *The Three Generals in Prison*), take place within the same architectural setting, and in the Castellani fresco cycle, three stages of *The Jew and the Cheating Christian* take place in the same composition, divided by the architectural setting (Figs 2.49, 2.70).

The Fra Angelico predella cycle demonstrates the possibilities available for representing multiple scenes and episodes, despite the restriction of space. In this cycle, the life of St Nicholas is told from birth to death, incorporating several famous stories in between; space is even available for the representation of the rare *Miracle of the Corn Ships*. Other predella cycles approach space limitation differently. The altarpiece painted c.1395 by Agnolo Gaddi, now in Munich, contains scenes representing *The Three Destitute Maidens* and *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm* (Figs 2.71, 2.72).[357] As this predella cycle contains only two scenes, examples of the saint's most popular stories are selected, perhaps so that they might be easily recognisable. A similar strategy may have influenced the choice of scenes in a number of other predellas where space is similarly limited. A predella cycle by Taddeo Gaddi, dated 1334 and now in Berlin,

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[357] For the altarpiece, see Cole (1977), esp. pp. 42-43, 83-84.

represents two scenes of *Adeodatus*: St Nicholas rescuing Adeodatus and returning him to his parents. A fifteenth-century panel by Alessio Baldovinetti (1425-99) at the Casa Buonarroti, Florence, contains just one scene: *St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution* from the *Praxis de Stratelates* (Figs 2.73, 2.74).[358] These selections indicate an awareness of the most popular scenes from the saint's life, and suggest that in the case of some very short cycles the need for recognition was prioritised over the expression of further concerns.

One altarpiece in the corpus of predella cycles demonstrates that emphases could be made even in restricted cycles. On the 1425 Gentile da Fabriano altarpiece, the iconography of the episodes in the short cycle has been manipulated to emphasise the dramatic aspect of the miracles depicted. This altarpiece was commissioned by the Quaratesi family for the church of S. Niccolò at the gate of S. Miniato in Florence.[359] In the scene of *The Birth of St Nicholas*, the bath miracle which immediately follows is given centre stage within the composition and the saint's mother, usually a dominant figure in this scene, is partly obscured behind a partition (Fig. 2.75).[360] In the scene of *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*, the saint dramatically swoops down to the ship in a mandorla of light, an arm raised in blessing to answer to the cries of the sailors (Fig. 2.76). In earlier representations of this scene, for example on the Bisceglie panel, the ship is depicted with devils in the sails that personify the storm; in the Quaratesi panel they are absent and the storm is instead indicated by the dark sky and billowing sails of the ship, as in the Fra Angelico panel of the same scene (Fig. 2.68). The result of this change is that St Nicholas is now the only supernatural figure in the composition, which increases the dramatic effect of the miracle. The scene of *The Three Destitute Maidens* shows St Nicholas actively throwing the third

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[358] For the Taddeo Gaddi altarpiece, see Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi. Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1982), pp. 127-29; for the Alessio Baldovinetti altarpiece, see Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984), pp. 96, 113.

[359] For the altarpiece, see Marcelli (2006), pp. 145-50. For the gate and church, see Francesco Bocchi, *The Beauties of the City of Florence. A Guidebook of 1591*, trans. Thomas Frangenberg and Robert Williams (London, Turnhout: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2006), pp. 125-260.

[360] See, for example, the altarpiece predella panel attributed to Paolo Veneziano, painted c.1340-45, formerly in the Contini Bonacossi collection in Florence and now in the Uffizi. In this scene, the figure of St Nicholas's mother and the bed on which she sits dominate the composition. This panel is discussed in Chapter 4, see pp. 214-15, below.

golden sphere into the bedroom, and in the scene of *The Innkeeper and the Three Pickled Boys*, a tall and dominant St Nicholas performs the blessing which brings the boys back to life, while the innkeeper and his wife kneel penitently behind (Figs 2.77, 2.78). Finally, the scene relating to St Nicholas's death does not depict his soul being carried to heaven, but rather *The Miracle of the Tomb*, which is rarely represented in Italian art (Fig. 2.79).[361] This scene emphasises the saint's healing powers, as crippled pilgrims approach the tomb while a miraculously healed man walks away carrying crutches over his shoulder.

This increase in the dramatic details of episodes from the life of St Nicholas is evident in earlier cycles, although to a much lesser degree. For example, in the scene of St Nicholas's rescue of Adeodatus in the fresco cycle at Assisi, the saint swoops into the scene instead of a gust of wind, and in the fresco cycle at Udine, the choice of scenes depicted suggest a focus upon the saint's miraculous powers. In the later Middle Ages the supernatural, miraculous abilities of the saints were emphasised;[362] the Quaratesi cycle is therefore indicative of contemporary trends concerning sanctity and the role of the saints for society. Through the manipulation of iconography, the cult of St Nicholas could remain relevant and could continue to respond to the many and diverse needs of its audience; this case study shows that this could be achieved even in restricted cycles.

The corpus of St Nicholas narrative scenes contains an interesting iconographical anomaly. A votive panel from the oratory of SS. Niccolò e Lucia in Siena contains one scene, a representation of St Nicholas stopping the torture of Biringucci (Fig. 2.80). This historical figure had escaped hanging by the Sienese for his part in the insurrection of the rebel *fuorusciti* against the *noveschi* in the year 1480.[363] In this scene St Nicholas is credited with preventing the

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[361] I have only identified 2 representations of St Nicholas's tomb within Italian art, on the Quaratesi altarpiece and in the fresco cycle at Vittorio Veneto.

[362] Vauchez (1997), p. 36.

[363] For the panel see Kaftal (1952), p. 765.

execution rather than the true protagonists, the Dominican and Franciscan friars.[364] This iconography is unique to this panel, and the episode does not originate within the saint's hagiography; it is presumably the creation of the panel's unknown donor. This scene presents a means of both communicating a message and making the scene recognisable. In the scene, the well-known iconography of St Nicholas rescuing condemned generals from execution has been adapted to illustrate an actual contemporary event. Thus, even when restricted to representing just one scene, the iconography of St Nicholas could continue to respond to and reflect specific needs. This scene also demonstrates that the cult of St Nicholas was still considered relevant at the close of the Middle Ages.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has identified key trends and developments within the iconography of St Nicholas in Italian art. The corpus of St Nicholas images is incomplete due to losses, and in certain regions at particular times the image of the saint is unknown.[365] Therefore, it cannot be known whether the iconographical developments identified within this chapter were new to the corpus, or whether they were present in the saint's Italian iconography considerably earlier. However, the surviving evidence nevertheless indicates that the iconography underwent significant transitions, as the image of St Nicholas in Italy in the later Middle Ages differs dramatically from the saint's iconography in the East.

The mid-fourteenth century was an important period in this development. The corpus of surviving images of St Nicholas discussed in this chapter displays three significant shifts around the year 1350: St Nicholas was represented dressed as a western bishop, he acquired an attribute, and a completely new scene which had no basis in any literary tradition of the saint was added to

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[364] Those found guilty of having contact with rebels were often severely punished. Biringucci was a resident of Siena found guilty of this crime. For further information, see Christine Shaw, *The Politics of Exile in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 154-55.

[365] For example, there are no surviving images of St Nicholas from Tuscany before the 12th century.

the cycles: *The Innkeeper and the Three Pickled Boys*. These shifts demonstrate how the iconography initially made subtle moves away from the Byzantine traditions, which dominated the early Italian images of the saint's life and miracles. Later, the saint's iconography became increasingly concerned with Italian affairs and included representations of events that were not described within the Greek literary tradition. At this point, the image of the saint himself changed. The image of St Nicholas became progressively more 'Italian' until the most dominant aspect of his identity, his role as a bishop, finally broke free from the East, and saint became firmly identified as a western bishop.

The changes in the iconography of St Nicholas occurred gradually, and through a long process of development and change. This process included hybrid images of the saint, and the steady introduction of representations of new events from the saint's life and miracles. The surviving cycles and images of St Nicholas appear to search for ways to express the saint's new image and miracles, and as a result they are varied and unrefined. This perhaps worked in favour of the success of the cult, as the variety in the representations, especially in the cycles, enabled different emphases to be placed on particular scenes. This in turn could reflect a range of different concerns and in turn catch the attention of many different patrons and audiences. As a result, the St Nicholas cycles discussed above display relationships to a wide spectrum of society.

The patrons of the St Nicholas images do not represent the only influence behind the development of the saint's iconography. The locations of the production of the cycles were important, and concerns pertinent to particular locations are reflected in the cycles. Another important factor was the literary traditions of the saint. The relationship of the cycles and narrative scenes to the textual sources is complex, and one did not exclusively influence the other: sometimes the cycles faithfully reproduced stories from the *Legenda Aurea*, but at other times the details were contradictory. This chapter emphasises that a particular source cannot be assumed for the cycles, and that the iconography and hagiography of St Nicholas developed alongside one another and were thus mutually dependent and influential upon each other.

A final important factor in the St Nicholas cycles was the space available, which determined the number of scenes that could be represented. The extraordinary amount of acts and miracles recorded in the saint's legends meant that specific choices about iconography had to be made, and certain scenes had to be chosen at the expense of others. The long cycles of the life and miracles of St Nicholas allow the illustration of different aspects of his personality, for example his caring role as the protector of children, his generosity in the charity he performed, and his role as saviour to stranded seafarers. In most cases, the cycles emphasise one particular aspect of his personality; in some cases, however, episodes were apparently chosen because they were the most well-known and therefore allowed the subject to be easily recognised. Individual scenes tended to represent the most popular stories, and there was a limit to what they could express; nevertheless, no matter how long or short the cycle, if a concern needed to be communicated, the cycle could accommodate it. The introduction of new iconography to the very short cycles, and of attributes to the single figures, indicates that innovation and spontaneity was possible even in restricted iconographical circumstances, and that the iconography of St Nicholas could be updated to ensure the saint's relevance for contemporary society.[366]

Chapters One and Two of this thesis have established that the cult and iconography of St Nicholas in medieval Italy underwent a transition that resulted in a new, Latin identity for the saint. In central Italy in particular this transition can be clearly observed within the saint's iconography. However, the process of Latinisation did not occur uniformly, and two locations in particular present important alternative courses of development: the region of Puglia and the Republic of Venice. In both cases, the presence of the relics of St Nicholas had a profound impact upon the cult of the saint that developed there. In addition, the promotion of the cult by the ruling classes and the role of St Nicholas as a state saint contributed to an alternative profile of the saint.

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[366] It is important to note that the iconographical developments in the cult of St Nicholas did not stop after the Middle Ages; this is, however, beyond the scope of this chapter. For the later iconography of St Nicholas in Italy, see, for example, Lucatuorto and Spagnoletti, eds (1984), pp. 115-66.

In both Puglia and Venice, the cults of St Nicholas that developed were highly specific to their locale, and for this reason they will form the subject of the following two chapters.

THE CULT OF ST NICHOLAS IN MEDIEVAL ITALY

VOLUME 2 OF 3

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VOLUME TWO

CHAPTER THREE: THE CULT OF ST NICHOLAS IN PUGLIA

INTRODUCTION

> St Nicholas, he is so great,
>
> For the good deeds that you have always done,
>
> You intervened with Jesus Christ for me
>
> The good deeds that you began,
>
> You liberated three Princes,
>
> You married three maidens,
>
> You comforted a widow,
>
> You resuscitated three children,
>
> You have always calmed storms,
>
> You succored sailors,
>
> And you tonight, St Nicholas,
>
> You must make an intercession,
>
> You must give good news.[1]

The songs of Adriatic fishermen and merchants reveal a strong devotion to St Nicholas, the saint who protected them at sea. In southern Italy, in particular the region of Puglia, the cult of St Nicholas was considerably shaped by the needs of the seafaring community. So far this thesis has described general trends within the cult of St Nicholas in Italy, focussing on the gradual

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[1] I am grateful to Stefania Gerevini for her help with translating this song: Sanda Nicola, tande si granne, / ... / Pe' l'opre bbone ca sèmbre facieste, / Cierche la grazie pe mè a Gése Criste / J'obbre bbone acchemenzaste, / Trè Principe libèraste, / Trè donzèlle maretaste, / 'Na vidue chenzelaste, / Trè fangiulle resuscetaste, / Le tempeste sèmbre calmaste, / Le marenare ajetaste, / E tu stasère, Sanda Nicole, / Nge à da fa la grazzie, / E nge à da dà 'na bbòna nove.' Saverio la Sorsa, 'Canti religiosi dei marinai pugliesi', *Lares* 5, nos 2-3 (Jun.-Sept. 1934), p. 192. The precise date and origin of this song are unknown, although the dialect is certainly southern-Italian. This incantation is part of a long oral tradition of Adriatic mariners, and is indicative of their devotion to St Nicholas.

Latinisation that occurred in the saint's liturgy, hagiography and iconography, and the ways in which the cult was updated to reflect later medieval spiritual concerns. The cult that developed in the regions of Puglia and Venice, however, presents anomalies. In addition to the particular needs of these communities, the cult of St Nicholas was influenced by one very important factor: the presence of the saint's relics. This chapter will discuss the cult of St Nicholas in the region of Puglia, touching also upon eastern Basilicata, to reveal how the introduction of the saint's relics at the end of the eleventh century impacted upon both the saint's cult and the community into which the relics were brought.

* * *

The translation of the relics of St Nicholas from Myra to Bari was a catalyst for the development of a unique identity for St Nicholas in southern Italy. Around the year 1088, at the behest of Archbishop Ursone of Bari (1080-89), John the Deacon wrote an account of the theft of the relics of St Nicholas from Myra, which had taken place in the preceding year.[2] According to John the Deacon, in the year 1087 a party of Barese merchants set sail for Antioch in order to sell grain.[3] While conducting their business, they learned that Myra had been captured by Turks and that a group of Venetian merchants in Antioch planned to travel there to steal the body of St Nicholas.[4] Determined that this honour should instead be theirs, the Barese merchants hurried to Myra. At

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[2] The manuscript written by John the Deacon is located at the Vatican: BAV, Cod. Vat. Lat. 447, fol. 29-38, as in Geary (1978), p. 98, fn. 30. See also Giovanni Arcidiacono, 'Translatio S. Nicolai episcopi ex Myra Lyciae urbe ad Apuliae oppidum Barium, vel Barum', in *De probatis Sanctorum histories* 3, ed. Laurentius Surius ([unknown]: Coloniae Agrippinae, 1618), as in Cioffari (1984), pp. 49-58. For the translation, see Corsi (1988); Francesco Nitti di Vito, 'La leggenda della traslazione delle reliquie di S. Nicola da Mira a Bari', *Japigia* 8 (1937), pp. 303-04. A helpful, brief summary of the account is given in Geary (1978), pp. 95-98.

[3] The names of the 62 sailors from Bari can be found in a handbook written in 1170 for the church of S. Nicola, now preserved in the Archivio di S. Nicola, Bari. See Francesco Nitti di Vito, ed., *CDB. Volume V: Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Bari. Periodo Normanno (1075-1194)* (Bari: Vecchi, 1902), pp. 279-81, no. 164. See also Cioffari (1984), p. 58.

[4] The Venetian involvement in the theft of the relics, according to the translation accounts, will be discussed in Chapter 4, see pp. 196-98.

the shrine of St Nicholas, the merchants announced to the custodians of the saint's tomb that they had been sent by the pope to bring the body of St Nicholas back to Italy. The reluctant custodians were forced to acquiesce because, when the merchants broke into the tomb, they were able to move the body which released a fragrant odour. The saint's compliance with the merchants' act was an indication of his will to be relocated. In the face of angry townsfolk who had arrived to defend the tomb, the merchants justified their deeds by claiming that Myra had had the honour of guarding the body of St Nicholas for long enough, that it was now the turn of the Latin West to benefit from the saint's presence, and that their task had been divinely bestowed upon them. Following their return to Bari, the merchants entrusted the body to Abbot Elias of the monastery of St Benedict. When the archbishop arrived three days later the body was moved to the church of St Stephen.

The manuscript account of John the Deacon is just one of several detailing the theft of the relics which survive today. Scholars have noted that the volume of Latin translation accounts for St Nicholas is unusually large in comparison to other saints, indicating the importance attached to the event during the later Middle Ages. [5] Another influential legend of the translation was written by one Niceforo, a monk from Bari, at the end of the eleventh century.[6] This account has been identified as an amalgamation of three earlier manuscript accounts, each written by a different Niceforo, and known as: *Niceforo Vaticano*;[7] *Niceforo Beneventano*,[8] and *Niceforo Greco*.[9] In

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[5] See Jones (1978), p. 175. Gerardo Cioffari lists 12 accounts of the translation appearing in Annals, taken from the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, from the year 1087 alone. More accounts survive from following years and, indeed, centuries. See Cioffari (1984), p. 41, fn. 2. As noted in the Hagiography section in Chapter 1, there are no known Greek accounts of the translation produced within the Byzantine empire. A Greek account does survive (see p. 127, fn. 9, below), but was produced in southern Italy in the 13th-century, where the Greek language and rite were used. For the Greek account, see *Λόγος εἰς τήν ἀνακομιδήν*, trans. J. Mc Ginley and Herbert Musurillo (Bari: Gerardo Cioffari, 1980).

[6] BAV, Cod. Vat. Lat. 5074, ff. 5v-10v, as in Geary (1978), p. 96, fn. 29. For the account of Niceforo, see Cioffari (1984), pp. 42-48. For an English translation, see Jones (1978), pp. 176-93.

[7] BAV, Cod. Vat. Lat. 6074, as in Cioffari (1984), p. 46.

[8] This manuscript is now at the Biblioteca Capitolare at Benevento. See Niccolò Putignani, *Istoria della vita, de' miracoli e della traslazione del gran taumaturgo S. Niccolò Arcivescovo di Mira. Padrone e protettore della citta, e della provincia di Bari* (Naples: Stamperia Raimondiana, 1771), pp. 551-68, as in Cioffari (1984), p. 46.

[9] Cod. Crypt. Gr. B β IV, as in Mc Ginley and Musurillo, trans. (1980).

this respect Niceforo's translation account reflects the composite nature of St Nicholas's hagiography, as discussed in Chapter One. Niceforo, and other authors, offer alternatives to some of the details recounted by John the Deacon. For example, according to an anonymous Russian account from the fourteenth century, on arrival at Bari the body of St Nicholas was deposited within the church of St John the Baptist at Sea, not the monastery of St Benedict.[10] The accounts all agree, however, on the divine justification given by the merchants for the theft, and on the triumphant reception of the body by the citizens of Bari.

The events of the 1087 translation were swiftly and widely recorded, but their repercussions are not just evident within the saint's hagiography. The arrival of the body of St Nicholas, and the shrine which rapidly developed at Bari, had an impact upon the cult of the saint which had been established in the region; as a result, the cult in Puglia differs considerably to the cult elsewhere in Italy. In addition, the translation impacted upon many diverse aspects of life in Bari and the wider region of Puglia in the later Middle Ages, including patterns of pilgrimage, local devotion and civic identity. Rival cults developed in response to the shrine at Bari, and the architecture of later churches imitated the sculptural elements of the church of S. Nicola. This chapter aims to elucidate possible reasons for the cult's phenomenal success within the region. It will explore the importance of the presence of the relics to the town of Bari, and how the cult came to display particular characteristics that are specific to the region, beginning with a discussion of the cult of St Nicholas in Puglia before the translation.

PART ONE: THE PRE-TRANSLATION CULT OF ST NICHOLAS IN PUGLIA

The translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Bari reflected the east-to-west transmission of the saint's cult in the region which occurred centuries earlier during Byzantine rule of southern Italy. Indeed, the translation did not initiate the spread of the cult of St Nicholas to the region, but may be considered a climax of a long-established devotion to the saint in Puglia. From as early as the

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[10] Geary (1978), pp. 98-99; Geary's source is Francesco Nitti di Vito (1937), pp. 317-35.

ninth century, several churches in Puglia were dedicated to St Nicholas and many displayed his image; these will be the focus of this section.

Byzantine rule in southern Italy lasted many centuries. In brief, the region had been under the control of the Eastern Empire from the fourth or fifth century until the eleventh. It was taken by the Ostragoths in the late-fifth century, but quickly re-conquered by Emperor Justinian in the sixth. At this time the Lombards were invading northern Italy and by the late-seventh century, most of Byzantine Puglia and Calabria were conquered by the Duchy of Benevento, a largely autonomous principality of the decentralized Lombard kingdom. In the year 876, however, the Lombards appealed to the eastern emperor for assistance in defending southern Italy against increasing Saracen invasions, which had begun in the mid-seventh century. The emperor seized the opportunity to oust the Saracens from southern Italy and to take back control of Puglia, which was achieved in the year 891. Following this victory, ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the region was transferred away from the papacy to Constantinople, and southern Italy and Sicily became fully incorporated into the Byzantine administrative system. Sometime before 969 the *catepanate* of southern Italy was created, with the *catepan* ruling from Bari. Byzantine control of the region, termed 'Longobardia', remained unchallenged until the arrival of the Normans in the mid-eleventh century.[11]

During and after the prolonged periods of Byzantine rule in southern Italy, Greek monasticism and the orthodox rite were practised widely within the region.[12] There is much debate concerning the initial presence and continued prevalence of orthodox monasticism in

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[11] The term 'Longobardia' referred to the Byzantine territories in southern Italy previously dominated by the Lombards. This region corresponds to the modern provinces of Puglia and north-east Basilicata. Details of the Byzantine occupation of southern Italy, including the Ostragoth, Lombard, Saracen and Norman invasions, can be found in Kazhdan, et al, eds (1991), esp. vol. 2, pp. 1022ff, 1249ff; vol. 3, pp. 1493ff.

[12] The orthodox rite remained in use long after Byzantine rule ended in southern Italy. In the region of Matera in eastern Basilicata, for example, the Greek rite was conserved until the mid-17th century. See André Guilou, 'Grecs d'Italie du sud et de Sicile au moyen âge: les moines', *MAH* 75 (Paris, 1963), pp. 79-110; Silvano Borsari, *Il monachesimo bizantino: nella Sicilia e nell'Italia meridionale prenormanne* (Naples: Istituto italiano per gli studi storici, 1963). For Matera, see Mario Salmi, *Le chiese rupestri di Matera* (Rome: De Luca Editore, 1995).

southern Italy. However, it is generally accepted that Greek-speaking communities fled to the region to escape persecution in the Eastern Empire, either because of Turkic conquests or the iconoclast controversy.[13] The legacy of the settlement of Basilian monks can be witnessed in their many surviving monuments located throughout southern Italy. Today, in the expansive regions surrounding the towns of Brindisi, Otranto and Taranto in Puglia, and Matera in eastern Basilicata, numerous rock-cut churches, crypts, and free-standing Greek church structures are preserved (for these locations, see [Fig. 3.1]). The fresco decoration inside these chambers often includes representations of orthodox saints. St Nicholas frequently appears amongst them, and is further emphasised through cycles of his life and a large number of church dedications, which reflect the popularity of the saint within the Orthodox Church.

The Greek monuments in Puglia and eastern Basilicata, in particular the rock-cut crypts and churches, have received much scholarly attention in the last two decades. The work of Marina Falla Castelfranchi in particular has increased awareness of this large and artistically important group of monuments, providing photographs of those that are often difficult to access and offering analyses of their decorational programmes.[14] A considerable challenge addressed by Castelfranchi is the dating of the monuments and their frescoes. In rare examples dates are provided by inscriptions (as discussed below), but in the majority of cases we are dependent on

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[13] For a summary of the arguments and hypotheses concerning the arrival of Basilian monks in southern Italy, see Peter Charanis, 'On the Question of the Hellenization of Sicily and Southern Italy During the Middle Ages', *AHR* 52 (1946), pp. 74-86, esp. pp. 76, 78.

[14] See Castelfranchi (1991); Marina Falla Castelfranchi, 'La decorazione pittorica delle chiese rupestri', in *Le chiese rupestri di Puglia e Basilicata*, eds Franco dell'Aquila and Aldo Messina (Bari: Mario Adda Editore, 1998), pp. 129-43. See also the chapters by Castelfranchi in Gioia Bertelli, ed., *Puglia preromanica. Dal V secolo agli inizi dell'XI* (Milan: Jaca Book, 2004): 'La chiesa di Santa Marina a Muro Leccese', pp. 193-205 (hereafter referred to as Castelfranchi, 2004^1), and 'La cripta delle Sante Marina e Cristina a Carpignano Salentino', pp. 207-19 (hereafter referred to as Castelfranchi, 2004^2). Additionally, see Giuseppe Gabriele, ed., *Inventario topografico e bibliografico delle cripte eremitiche basiliane di Puglia* (Rome: Reale Istituto d'archeologia e storia dell'arte, 1936). During a research trip to Puglia and eastern Basilicata, I discovered that many of the rock-cut churches and crypts are located on private or military land, or in *masserie*, and are therefore closed to the public. Many others are currently closed for restoration, although I was fortunate to be allowed access to some of these, in particular the rock-cut church of S. Nicola dei Greci in the town of Matera.

stylistic analysis. This section will employ the dates given by Castelfranchi, or by my own research undertaken in the region.

A recently restored rock-cut church dedicated to St Nicholas near Mottola, twenty kilometers north-west of Taranto, contains internal frescoes stylistically dated to the eleventh and thirteenth centuries.[15] Amongst these, on an archway separating the nave and right aisle, are two images of St Nicholas from the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, layered one on top of the other (Fig. 3.2).[16] In an external niche to the right of the entrance to the church, a series of striking red monumental crucifixes dominate the façade (Fig. 3.3). The group is dated to the ninth century, and includes one very large symbolic cross and many smaller ones, which are repeated inside in the archway of the apse.[17] The symbols could represent consecration crosses, or could even be emblematic of the iconoclast controversy of the Byzantine Empire, and indeed date from the time when iconoclast bishops were present in Puglia.[18] The size and location of the external red crosses make them highly visible, and increase the potential audience for the message. How the crosses were understood in a south-Italian context is not certain, but their presence demonstrates how important events in the Byzantine Empire could effect the decoration of churches in Puglia, and how a monument dedicated to St Nicholas in this region could display significant political, social and religious concerns.

One of the oldest surviving Byzantine rock-cut crypts in Puglia is located in the town of Carpignano Salentino, twelve kilometers north-west of Otranto on the Salentine peninsular. The subterranean crypt of Ste Marina e Cristina, also known as the Madonna delle Grazie, was cut directly from limestone rock as part of an original rock-cut settlement, of which only traces are still visible. The structure is divided into two distinct halves. To the east is a larger sanctuary,

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[15] Castelfranchi (1991), p. 29.

[16] Ibid., p. 85.

[17] Castelfranchi (1998), p. 136. The crosses are similar to others located in the region.

[18] Ibid., p. 136; Gioia Bertelli, ed., *Puglia preromanica. Dal V secolo agli inizi dell'XI* (Milan: Jaca Book, 2004), p. 28. At the start of the 9th century Otranto had an iconoclast bishop and a number of iconoclast citizens. When Puglia returned to Byzantine rule in the 8th century, Otranto was a principal Byzantine port; it is expected that eastern ecclesiastical politics would be reflected in the art of the region. See Linda Safran, *S. Pietro at Otranto. Byzantine Art in South Italy* (Rome: Edizioni Rari Nantes, 1992), p. 12.

dedicated to St Christina and containing a single nave and a double apse. To the west is a smaller area, probably reserved for funerary purposes as suggested by a surviving *arcosolium* and memorial inscription, which will be discussed below.[19] Both areas contain frescoes which cover nearly all internal walls. Restored in the 1990s, the frescoes display a complex programme of full-length figures painted over the course of six centuries; some, however, can be securely dated by inscriptions. For example, in the right-hand apse of the larger sanctuary to the east, the fresco of Christ Pantokrator flanked by the Virgin and Archangel of the Annunciation is signed by the painter Theophylaktos, and dated 959.[20] The left-hand apse, which contains an enthroned Christ with a smaller group of the Virgin and Child to the left, is signed by Eustathios, and dated by the same inscription to the year 1020.[21]

The crypt contains three full-length representations of St Nicholas. The earliest figure is located on the north wall adjacent to the Virgin and Child attributed to Eustathios, standing to the right of a group of figures which include, left to right, John the Evangelist, the Virgin and Child, St Vincent and St Nicholas (Fig. 3.4). This group was probably part of the work completed by Eustathios, based on the consistency of the red frame which borders the Virgin and Child and the saints, therefore dating the group to around the year 1020.[22] St Nicholas is identified by a Greek inscription, and is recognisable by his orthodox episcopal clothing, his large, high forehead, and short, grey beard.[23] The second St Nicholas, also dated to the early-eleventh century, is located on a wide supporting pillar in the centre of the nave, which forms a sort of *iconostasis* (Fig. 3.5).

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[19] An *arcosolium* is an arched recess in a church used to house a sarcophagus. See the glossary in Helen C. Evans, ed., *Byzantium. Faith and Power (1261-1557)* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 642.

[20] Susan Sinclair, 'The Relationship between Art and Liturgy on the Periphery of the Byzantine Empire: The Cases of 10th-Century Cappadocia and Longobardia (Apulia)', Ph.D. thesis (Courtauld Institute of Art, 2003), p. 157.

[21] For the inscription, see Sinclair (2003), pp. 171-72.

[22] André Jacob also dates this group of saints to the first half of the 11th century on the basis of the palaeography and spelling of an inscription to the left of St Vincent. See André Jacob, 'L'inscription métrique de l'enfeu de Carpignano', *RBN* nos 20-21 (1983-84), p. 110; see also Sinclair (2003), p. 170.

[23] The inscription reads: … ΑΓ … ΝΙΚ …. See Sinclair (2003), p. 169.

Here St Nicholas is flanked on the left by St Theodore and on the right by St Christina, dressed as a Byzantine empress.[24] Again, the figures are identified by Greek inscriptions.

The third St Nicholas image is located in the smaller section of the crypt to the west, believed to have been reserved for funerary purposes. A donor cited in the inscription of the *arcosolium* on the north wall says of himself:

> I recovered [these walls] with new images, I excavated a tomb for the entombment and burial of my body, which was formed of clay. But with regard to his name, you will say: Who could this person be and from where is he? …yra… is his name, honest of morals, spatharios and inhabitant of Carpignano, servant of Christ and of the saints, of the Theotokos, most immaculate queen, and of Nicholas, [the Bishop] of Myra … (Fig. 3.6).[25]

This inscription is dated on the basis of paleology to 1055-75,[26] and is accompanied by frescoes on the surrounding arch of the Virgin and St Nicholas, representing the 'Theotokos' and 'Nicholas of Myra' in the inscription (Fig. 3.7). This arrangement including the Theotokos is typically Greek, and is significant because it provides evidence of personal devotion to St Nicholas in Puglia before the translation of the saint's relics to Bari. In the *arcosolium* decoration, this devotion is given equal visual prominence as the donor's devotion to the Virgin.

A further interesting point to note about the fresco decoration of this crypt is the presence of imperial references. As noted above, St Christina wears the garb of a Byzantine empress;

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[24] Castelfranchi identifies the figure of St Theodore as Theodore Studios, the 9th-century Byzantine monk from the monastery of St John the Studios in Constantinople. Castelfranchi (2004^2), p. 218.

[25] [+ Ἐ]παμφίασα εἰκόνας καὶ νουργίας, τύμβον ὤρυξα πρὸς ταφὴν καὶ κηδείαν τοῦ σώματός μου τοῦ γηίνου πλασθέντος. Περὶ δὲ αύτοῦ τοῦ ὀνόματος λέγεις Ἢ τίς ἢ και πόθεν ἢ ό μέροψ οῦτος; … υρα… τοῦνο[μ]α, καλὸς τοῖς τρόπο[ις], σπ[α]θ[άρ]ιος τ[ε] οἰκῶν ἐν Καρ[πι]νιάνα, ύπου[ργὸς] Χριστ[οῦ καὶ] τῶν άγίων τούτων, τῆς παναχράντου δεσποίνης θεοτόκου και [Νι]κολάου τ[οῦ] Μύρων … . The Greek inscription is transcribed by Jacob (1983-84), pp. 108-09. The English translation is taken from Sinclair (2003), p. 167. The *spatharioi* were a category of imperial guard.

[26] Jacob (1983-84), p. 113.

likewise, the figures of St Catherine of Alexandria and the Archangel Michael, located on the northern and western walls of the eastern sanctuary, also wear Byzantine imperial clothing (Fig. 3.8). The presence of imperial iconography is a reminder that in the early-eleventh century the Salentine peninsular had a strong relationship with the Eastern Empire, and was at this point still under Byzantine control. Furthermore, the occupation of the donor named in the *arcosolium* inscription as a *spatharios*, an elite imperial guard, presents an alternative pre-translation conduit for the cult of St Nicholas to the region, in addition to the immigrant Basilian monks.

A possible imperial connection can be witnessed elsewhere in the Salentine region, in the fresco decoration of the church of Sta Marina (a modern dedication) in the nearby town of Muro Leccese, located approximately twenty kilometres south of Carpignano Salentino (Fig. 3.9). The small church, with a single nave and semicircular apse, is dated on account of its building type to the second half of the ninth century.[27] Two layers of painting have been identified on the interior walls of the church: traces of the first layer, dated to the tenth century, survive on the apse wall and include a scene of the Ascension and a figure of St Barbara.[28] The second layer was added on top of the first when the church was renovated in the mid-eleventh century, and includes a succession of saints, mostly bishops, martyrs and hermits, on the walls of the nave.[29] St Nicholas appears on the third *arcone*, or arch, from the apse, to the left of the nave. Here the saint is again represented as an orthodox bishop, blessing with his right hand and holding a book in his covered left hand (Fig. 3.10).

The fresco decoration of this church is important because it contains one of the earliest surviving cycles of the life of St Nicholas in either Italian or Byzantine art.[30] On the section of wall between the top of the second *arcone* and the ceiling are representations of several scenes

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[27] Castelfranchi (2004^1), pp. 193-94.

[28] As identified by Castelfranchi (1991), p. 101.

[29] See Castelfranchi (2004^1), p. 196.

[30] The earliest surviving cycle of St Nicholas in Byzantine art has been identified by Ševčenko as an icon now in 2 parts, preserved at the monastery of St Catherine at Mt Sinai and the chapel of the Forty Martyrs of Sinai at Arba'in. The icon is dated to the 11th century; the Muro Lecceso cycle could predate this icon. See Ševčenko (1983), p. 29.

from the life and miracles of the saint.[31] The first scene appears on the opposite wall of the nave from the standing figure of St Nicholas. This partly damaged scene represents the saint's Consecration as a Deacon, and shows the small figure of St Nicholas, beardless to show his youth, standing next to a ciborium or altar, behind which stands a bishop (Fig. 3.11).[32] On another section of wall is a representation of *The Tree of Plakoma* from the *Thauma de Arthemide* story.[33] Above the second *arcone* on the right-hand wall, a third scene is dominated by the keel of a small boat handled by men with oars; above, St Nicholas is identified by the Greek inscription 'Niko' (Fig. 3.12). On the wall opposite the second *arcone* on the right-hand side are the possible partial remains of a scene from the *Praxis de Stratelates* miracle, in which St Nicholas appears to either Ablabio or Emperor Constantine in a dream.[34] Because this cycle starts with Nicholas's Consecration, rather than his Birth, it is likely that more scenes were originally present.[35] The selection of scenes that does survive is typically found in Greek cycles of the life of St Nicholas, as discussed in Chapter Two.

The dating of the St Nicholas cycle to the mid-eleventh century is significant because it demonstrates a hagiographical tradition of the saint in Puglia which predates the 1087 translation. The presence of the St Nicholas cycle has also aroused speculation that, in the eleventh century at least, the church may have been dedicated to St Nicholas.[36] This proposal would shed light on the prominent inclusion of an imperial figure within the mid-eleventh-century fresco decoration. Opposite the main figure of St Nicholas, on the south wall of the nave between the second and third arches towards the apse, are the remaining fragments of a scene depicting the jeweled throne and sandaled foot of Christ. At the right-hand foot of the throne a female figure wearing long

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[31] This section of the wall has been damaged in recent years because of remodelling works to the roof. See Castelfranchi (2004^1), p. 205. Today, the cycle is very difficult to discern because of poor lighting, and only small fragments of the frescoes survive.

[32] Castelfranchi (1991), pp. 102-03.

[33] Ibid., p. 103. Castelfranchi does not publish an image of this scene, and I could not identify the scene within the damaged cycle of the church.

[34] Ibid., p. 105. Again, Castelfranchi does not publish this scene, and I could not locate it in the church.

[35] As suggested by Castelfranchi (2004^1), pp. 202-03.

[36] Castelfranchi (1991), p. 105; Castelfranchi (2004^1), p. 203. The dedication to Sta Marina is modern.

braided hair and a modest crown kneels in *proskynesis* (Fig. 3.13). In Byzantine art, crowns were reserved solely for imperial figures, suggesting that this fresco could represent an empress.[37] Indeed, the crown bears similarities to contemporary Byzantine representations of imperial regalia, for example on the mosaic panel of the Empress Zoe (1028-50) and her third husband Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-55) in the south gallery of the church of H. Sophia at Constantinople (Fig. 3.14).[38] In the mosaic, Zoe wears a crown constructed from two jeweled bands of gold surmounted by triangular gold segments. In the fresco at Muro Leccese the empress's crown also contains wide bands of gold with gemstones, although here they are topped by semi-circular pieces, like those on the eleventh-century Holy Crown of Hungary (Fig. 3.15).[39]

Castelfranchi has suggested that the Muro Leccese fresco is in fact a representation of Empress Zoe.[40] There is circumstantial evidence to support this theory. The Muro Leccese fresco is dated to the time of the mid-eleventh-century renovation of the church, during which time the Byzantine Empire was ruled by Empress Zoe and her three consecutive husbands, and her sister Theodora.[41] Zoe and Constantine IX are known to have been devoted to St Nicholas: an inscription in the now-ruined church of H. Nikolaos at Myra attests that, in the year 1042 or 1043, Zoe and Constantine IX patronised the restoration and decoration of the shrine (Fig. 0.4).[42] Constantine IX also donated to Bari a church dedicated to St Nicholas, twenty years before the saint's body was taken there.[43]

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[37] As suggested by Castelfranchi (1991), p. 106.

[38] For the Zoe panel at H. Sophia, see Thomas Whittemore, *The Mosaics of Hagia Sophia at Istanbul. The Imperial Portraits of the South Gallery* (Boston: Oxford University Press, 1942), pp. 7-15. See also Robin Cormack, 'The Emperor at St Sophia: Viewer and Viewed', in *Byzance et les images*, ed. Jannic Durand (Paris: La Documentation français, 1994), pp. 240-41.

[39] Castelfranchi (1991), p. 106. For the crown, see Patrick J. Kelleher, *The Holy Crown of Hungary* (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1951); Cecily J. Hilsdale, 'The social life of the Byzantine gift: The Royal Crown of Hungary re-invented', *Art History* 31, no. 5 (November, 2008), pp. 603-31.

[40] Castelfranchi (1991), p. 106; Castelfranchi (2004^1), p. 204.

[41] Zoe had 3 husbands between 1028 and 1055, who she ruled alongside as Empress: Romanos III, Michael IV and Constantine IX. Before marrying Constantine, Zoe ruled as co-Empress with her sister Theodora in 1042. After Constantine's death in 1055, Theodora ruled as sole autocrat for a year.

[42] Castelfranchi (1991), p. 106. For the inscription, see Ötüken (2006), pp. 55-57.

[43] According to a document dated 1202 published by Nitti di Vito, Constantine IX ordered a monk by the name of Giovanni to build the church. See Nitti di Vito, ed. (1897), p. 139, no. 72. See also Cioffari

If Empress Zoe is depicted amongst the fresco decoration of the church at Muro Leccese, this is not necessarily an indication of the empress's personal patronage, and the empress was not known to have travelled to the region. However, Zoe's known devotion to St Nicholas, and the probablity of the church's dedication to this saint, makes the possibility of her image, and also her patronage, feasible. Alternatively, the fresco could represent homage to the imperial couple on behalf of the unknown donor of the mid-eleventh-century restoration. Perhaps the representation of the empress was once accompanied by an emperor, or even her sister Theodora, whose image has since been lost. In this instance the presence of the empress and the possible dedication of the church to St Nicholas may not be related; although the links do strengthen the relationship between the empress and the cult of the saint.

The strong presence of the cult of St Nicholas near Otranto can perhaps be explained by a miraculous event concerning the town and the father of the ninth-century Byzantine Patriarch Methodius, the same patriarch who oversaw the restoration of holy images at the end of the Byzantine iconoclast controversy. According to the *Encomium Methodii*, the life of St Nicholas written by the Patriarch Methodius, his father was returning to the major Byzantine port of Otranto when he was swept away by a wave. On invoking St Nicholas, he was saved.[44] The miracle is significant because it links St Nicholas to Puglia: the saint therefore had a connection to the region before his relics arrived there, and the miracle recorded in the *Encomium Methodii* shows this connection was also established within the saint's hagiography.

If the church at Muro Leccese was originally dedicated to St Nicholas, this building could be the earliest documented monument dedicated to the saint in Italy, and should be considered alongside the other early evidence of the saint's cult, at Rome, that is frequently cited.[45] St

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(1984), p. 38; Meisen (1931), p. 65; Jones (1978), p. 166. This church, served by Basilian monks, is dated to 1025-54.

[44] Castelfranchi (2004^1), p. 204. For the *Encomium Methodii*, see Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, pp. 151-82.

[45] See Chapter 1 for the early churches dedicated to St Nicholas in Rome. The church of S. Nicola in Carcere, Rome, is believed to have been dedicated to the saint in the 9th century, although a precise date is not known. It is possible, therefore, that the rock-cut church at Muro Leccese predates the church of S.

Nicholas was a popular choice for church dedications in Puglia before the translation. For example, a rock-cut church dedicated to St Nicholas and dated to the second half of the eleventh century survives near Fasano, a town near the coast mid-way between Bari and Brindisi. Near Venosa in north-east Basilicata is located the tenth-century *monasterium S. Nicolai de Morbano*.[46] In south-east Basilicata, in the area surrounding the town of Matera, are located the tenth- or eleventh-century rock-cut church of S. Nicola a Chiancalata,[47] and the church of S. Nicola al Saraceno, dated to the second half of the eleventh century.[48] Pre-translation church dedications to St Nicholas in Puglia were not limited to remote monasteries and rock-cut churches; the church of Sta Marina at Muro Leccese shows them to be present also in urban areas, and indeed in the town of Monopoli, just south of Bari on the coast, a St Nicholas monastery was erected around the year 1054.[49]

An under-acknowledged aspect of the cult of St Nicholas in Puglia is the saint's strong presence in the most important urban centre, Bari, from at least the early-eleventh century. Before the 1087 translation there were at least four churches, one cell and a monastery dedicated to the saint in and around the city, all dating to the eleventh century.[50] In the middle of this century, Archbishop Nicola of Canosa and Bari (d.1061) was responsible for the building of the church of SS. Nicola e Basilio in loco Prandulo (c.1035), and, just outside the city walls of Bari, the church

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Nicola in Carcere. For the date and dedication of S. Nicola in Carcere, see Palombi (2006), esp. pp. 55ff.

[46] See Agostino Pertusi, 'Ai confini tra religione e politica. La contesa per le reliquie di S. Nicola tra Bari, Venezia e Genova', *QM* 5 (Jun. 1978), p. 10.

[47] See Franco dell'Aquila and Aldo Messina, *Le chiese rupestri di Puglia e Basilicata* (Bari: Mario Adda Editore, 1998), p. 192.

[48] Aquila and Messina (1998), p. 200.

[49] The monastery of St Nicholas at Monopoli was founded by one Sasso di Calone. See Borsari (1963), p. 104; Pertusi (1978), p. 10.

[50] For details, see Pertusi (1978), pp. 11-13, esp. p. 11, fn. 12 for references to lists of St Nicholas churches in and around Bari. For an ecclesiastical history of Bari before 1087, including churches there dedicated to St Nicholas, see Cioffari (1992), esp. pp. 124-25.

of S. Nicola in Turre Musarra (c.1032).[51] In 1053 the latter received privileges from Pope Leo IX, confirming the church to be of considerable importance.[52]

The cult of St Nicholas may have been present in Bari before churches were dedicated to him there. Ruined sections of a Byzantine church, including the lower section of the three-apse sanctuary and a small section of its *iconostasis*, have recently been excavated in Bari. The ruins, now on display at the Palazzo Simi, are dated to the tenth century because Byzantine coins representing the Emperor Constantine VII (908-59) and his mother Zoe were recovered during excavations of the apse.[53] The fresco decoration of the central apse, dated to the time of the church's foundation, is still visible. As only the lower section of the apse wall survives and the faces and possible inscriptions are lost, the identity of the figures cannot be known for certain. However, Castelfranchi believes the figures represent a typical succession of orthodox bishop saints, including John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil and Nicholas (Figs 3.16, 3.17).[54]

The majority of pre-translation representations of St Nicholas in Puglian monuments show the saint as a single figure dressed as an orthodox bishop.[55] In the crypt of SS. Stefani near Vaste, south-west of Otranto (so-called because of three internal fresco representations of St Stephen), St Nicholas appears twice. The first appearance is in a bay on the right-hand wall of the church, where the saint is identified by a Greek inscription and stylistically dated to the late-tenth or early-eleventh century (Fig. 3.18). The second is in a small niche to the left of the apse where he is accompanied by Sts Basil and John Chrysostom, again identified by a Greek inscription and

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[51] Cioffari (1984), pp. 107-08; Pertusi (1978), pp. 11-13.

[52] See Cioffari (1984), p. 111. This privilege was re-confirmed in a bull issued by Pope Nicholas II in the year 1059, according to a document dated 24 August 1059 from the Archivio Curia Arcivescovile, Bari. See Antonio Gambacorta, ed., *Pellegrinaggi e culto dei santi in Europa fino alla I. Crociata: 8-11 ottobre 1961* (Todi: Accademia tudertina, 1963), pp. 491-92.

[53] The remains of the church were discovered during excavations of Palazzo Lamberti, located on via Lamberti beneath the pavement of a later 12th- or 13th-century church built on top. See Giovanna Pacilio, 'Via Lamberti', in *Archeologia di una citta. Bari dalle origini al X secolo*, eds Giuseppe Andreassi and Francesca Radina (Bari: Edipuglia, 1988), pp. 545-51; see pp. 547, 550 for the Byzantine coins representing Constantine VII and Zoe.

[54] Castelfranchi (1991), p. 140.

[55] See Aquila and Messina (1998), p. 274. See also Mariani (2006), pp. 108-09, for a brief summary of representations of St Nicholas in the rock-cut churches of Puglia.

dated to the first decade of the eleventh century (Fig. 3.19).[56] The rock-cut church of S. Nicola dei Greci, Matera, also has an eleventh-century fresco of St Nicholas dressed as an orthodox bishop; however, here the saint is identified by a Latin inscription: S. NICLAVS (Fig. 2.2). This combination of orthodox iconography and a Latin inscription for the image of St Nicholas can also be seen in the rock-cut church of S. Giovanni in Monterrone, also at Matera (Fig. 3.20).

The reasons for the use of these Latin inscriptions, which were painted at the same time as the figures, are unclear. It is unlikely they were intended to benefit the laity because the Greek rite remained strong in the region surrounding Matera even beyond the Middle Ages.[57] It is also improbable that the Latin inscriptions reflect a desire to assert Latin, i.e. Norman, dominance over the existing Greek population. Indeed, the Norman means of doing so were much less subtle: as will be discussed below, in the late-eleventh century the Norman monastery of S. Nicola in Casole, near Otranto, was built for the local Greek population purposely, it has been argued, to restore Roman jurisdiction to the Greek-speaking southern regions.[58] The monastery was destroyed in 1480 by Turkish raids. Its dedication to St Nicholas is a reflection of the importance of the saint to the Norman rulers; it may have been generally acknowledged at that time that the same saint who was so popular with the Byzantine communities, and who was so prominently represented within the rock-cut churches, was taken on by the new rulers to become a symbol of their control. St Nicholas became a patron saint of the Normans following the translation of his relics; the Normans now controlled the body of St Nicholas and, in turn, St Nicholas became a symbol of this control. The pre-translation Latin inscriptions in the rock-cut churches of southern Italy were unlikely to have been present for a similar purpose; rather they were perhaps simply a consequence of the diverse population of the region. Interestingly, the inscriptions appear to

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[56] Castelfranchi (1991), pp. 71, 233-37.

[57] See p. 129, fn. 12, above.

[58] As argued by Gianfreda. According to archival documents from Turin, in 1098-99 Giuseppe, the Abbot of Casole, founded or restored the monastery of S. Nicola di Casole with the help of the Norman Prince Boemond. See Grazio Gianfreda, *Il monachesimo italo-greco in Otranto* (Lecce: Edizioni del Grifo, 1994), p. 83.

anticipate the post-translation developments in the iconography of St Nicholas, and the Latinisation of the cult seen elsewhere in Italy.

However, the later iconographical developments seen in the figure of St Nicholas in Italian art, described in Chapter Two, are not evident in the Puglian monuments. Here, the Latinisation of St Nicholas does not go beyond the language of his identifying inscriptions. I have found only a few examples of St Nicholas represented in the clothing of a western bishop in Puglia. Two of these are on altarpieces painted by Bartolomeo Vivarini, one in the church of S. Nicola at Bari, dated by inscription to 1476,[59] the other in the Pinacoteca Provinciale also at Bari, dated to c.1478 (Figs 3.21, 3.22).[60] These two panels were produced in Venice for churches in Puglia: the church of S. Nicola at Bari, and the Franciscan convent church of Sta Maria della Grazie at Altamura. In both examples St Nicholas bears a striking resemblance to other Vivarini images of the saint, for example the 1450-51 panel by Antonio Vivarini at the Seminario Patriarcale in Venice (Fig. 2.15).[61] The Vivarini images present St Nicholas with short, tight curly hair and wearing a red cope, sometimes embroidered with a cross. The saint holds a crosier in one hand and in the other he balances three golden spheres on top of a book. The sleeve of the saint's undergarment, always visible on the arm of the hand holding the book, hangs to a point terminating with a tassel.

It is significant that these images of St Nicholas dressed as a Latin bishop were produced by a Venetian artist. This iconography has therefore been imported to Puglia from northern Italy, where the east-west iconographical development can be witnessed, as demonstrated in Chapter Two. Elsewhere in Puglia, in the post-translation rock-cut churches and urban cathedrals, St Nicholas remained eastern, even in the fourteenth century when in northern and central Italy the

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[59] For the altarpiece in the church of S. Nicola, Bari, see Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 265-66. Another example is a 1465 altarpiece by Bartolomeo Vivarini at the cathedral of Polignano a Mare: see Rodolfo Pallucchini, *I Vivarini (Antonio, Bartolomeo, Alvise)* (Venice: N. Pozza, 1962), p. 43. See also the fresco representation of St Nicholas at Sta Maria Maggiore, Monte S. Angelo, discussed on p. 66, above.

[60] For the altarpiece now in the Pinacoteca Provinciale, Bari, see Clara Gelao, ed., *La Pinacoteca provinciale di Bari* (Rome: Istituto poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Libreria dello Stato, 2007), pp. 136-38.

[61] This panel will be discussed in Chapter 4, pp. 244-45.

saint acquired the attributes of a western bishop. For example, in the fourteenth-century Greek church of S. Stefano at Soleto, twenty kilometers north-west of Otranto, the monumental fresco image of St Nicholas on the right-hand wall of the single-nave building presents the saint wearing an *omophorion*, blessing with his right hand and holding a book with his covered left hand (Fig. 3.23).[62] The saint is identified by a Greek inscription. The frescoes in this church display awareness of figurative painting developments in central Italy. Parallels can be seen, in particular, between the delicate, elongated eyes of the Archangel Michael, located on the north wall of the church opposite St Nicholas, and the eyes of figures from Giottesque painting of the early Trecento (Figs 3.24, 3.25). However, while receptive to stylistic developments outside the region, the artist does not represent St Nicholas as a Latin bishop. In Puglia, therefore, despite the importation of the Latin image of St Nicholas to Bari, the iconography of the saint does not follow the same course of development as seen elsewhere in Italy. Perhaps in this region St Nicholas was understood to be, and remained even after the translation, a Greek bishop saint.

The prevailing presence of the Greek rite in southern Italy was hugely influential for the cult of St Nicholas in the regions of Puglia and eastern Basilicata. The settlement of Basilian monks in the region, and the establishment of the Byzantine seat of power at Bari, presented channels for the establishment of the cult of St Nicholas during the century before the translation. Following this event, the cult of St Nicholas in Puglia developed in very specific ways. The above discussion has shown that the iconography of St Nicholas in this region was exceptional; the saint's post-translation cult in general reflects this.

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[62] The church of S. Stefano at Soleto was built in the mid-14th century as part of a mass regeneration initiative in the town, which also included the building of town walls. The church was originally dedicated to both Sts Stephen and Sophia. The orthodox rite must have been practiced in the church, as to the left of the single apse is a small niche, the *prothesis*, used for the preparation of bread and wine according to the orthodox liturgy. This information is provided on site by *Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici della Puglia*. See also Berger and Jacob, eds (2007).

PART TWO: THE CULT OF ST NICHOLAS IN PUGLIA AFTER THE TRANSLATION

Immediately after the translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Bari, work began on the construction of a shrine in which to place them. The resulting church of S. Nicola became one of the most important pilgrimage sites in the Latin West. St Nicholas was also adopted as the patron of the Norman monarchy. This section will discuss the church of S. Nicola at Bari and examine how the shrine impacted on pilgrimage patterns in Puglia; it will also assess the role of the Norman monarchy in promoting the cult and their contribution to the success of the shrine at Bari.

BARI, ST NICHOLAS AND THE RULERS OF SOUTHERN ITALY

It is important to establish the history of the city of Bari, and the context in which the shrine of St Nicholas was established, in order to understand the impact that the translation had upon the region of Puglia. Long before the arrival of the body of St Nicholas brought Bari to the attention of the entire Christian world, the port had played an important role in both southern Italy and the wider Adriatic context. The position of the port of Bari on the Adriatic coast resulted in the town's success as a major commercial centre. This was, however, also its burden; because of the trading and defensive opportunities that the town's location offered, Bari was at the centre of the continual power struggles that dominate the region's history.[63]

At the beginning of the ninth century the Lombards took Bari from Byzantine control, and the town and surrounding region experienced relative calm under the control of the *Gastaldo* Pandone, the Lombard civil authority. In 847 the city was taken by a Saracen incursion and briefly became the Emirate of Bari under the rule of the Emir Kahfun. During the years of Islamic

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[63] For an extensive and detailed account of the history of the rulers of Bari see, for example: Francesco Carabellese, *L'Apulia ed il suo comune nell'alto Medio Evo* (Bari: Società di storia patria per la Puglia, 1960, first published 1905); David Abulafia, *The Western Mediterranean Kingdoms, 1200-1500. The Struggle for Dominion* (London, New York: Longman, 1997); Cioffari (1984).

rule trade relationships were established between Bari and other Arab centres, enabling Bari to flourish as a successful commercial centre.[64] After two and a half decades Bari was recaptured in 871 by the Frankish King and Holy Roman Emperor Louis II, with the help of his ally the Byzantine Emperor Basil I. The Eastern Emperor was consolidating his rule within southern Italy and seized the opportunity to use Bari as a base for ousting the Lombard rulers, and of helping the Adriatic become free of the threatening Saracen presence.[65] Thus, in the year 970, Bari became the capital of the Byzantine provinces in southern Italy and the residence of the *catapan*, the Greek military governor who had supreme authority over Puglia and the surrounding regions of Calabria, Basilicata and Campania.

As a Byzantine outpost, Bari shared the successes of the Byzantine Empire. The town's increasing commercial activities brought wealth and prosperity to the town, which also benefited from relative social autonomy and protection by the empire's navy.[66] Ecclesiastically, Bari had been a dependent of the diocese of Canosa until Byzantine rulership transferred the episcopal seat to Bari, ensuring that the town had ecclesiastical as well as political supremacy.[67] However, in the early-eleventh century, Byzantine power in southern Italy began to diminish as, over the following decades, the region was gradually conquered by Norman invaders from the north. In 1071, Bari was eventually taken after a three-year siege and the town entered a new era of rulership from the north under the command of the Norman Robert Guiscard, Duke of Puglia and Calabria (1059-85).[68] In 1087 Norman merchants stole the body of St Nicholas from the former

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[64] Cioffari (1984), p. 19. On the Saracen occupation of Bari and southern Italy Cioffari recommends Giosuè Musca, *L'emirato di Bari, 847-871* (Bari: Dedalo libri, 1978).

[65] Cioffari (1984), p. 19, see fn. 13 for the Byzantine fleet in Bari.

[66] Giovanni Battista Bronzini, 'Santi e mercanti sui mari di Puglia. Schede di ex voto marinari pugliesi, a cura di F. Mirizzi', *Lares* 55, no. 1 (1989), p. 5. Puglian mercantile activity during Byzantine rule was mostly with the Levant, which continued into the Norman period. For the role of Bari as a Byzantine outpost and the resulting influence of Byzantine rulership upon Bari and Puglia, see Belli d'Elia, et al (1980), pp. 5-36.

[67] For the 1025 papal bull of John XIX, in which the pope transfered authority to Bari of the towns previously under the authority of Canosa, see Nitti di Vito, ed. (1897), pp. 21-23, no. 13.

[68] The Norman conquest of southern Italy was a complicated and drawn-out affair, causing chaos in the region for most of the 11th century. For a detailed account of the Norman conquest see John Julius

Byzantine territory of Lycia. It could be argued that the theft was deliberate rather than opportunistic, as the adoption of a saint revered by the Byzantine emperors demonstrated the control that the Normans now had over former Byzantine territories. Guiscard's brother, Count Roger I of Sicily (1071-1101), provided land for the construction of a shrine to house the relics of St Nicholas. The land provided for the church of S. Nicola was part of the ancient Byzantine palace, from where the Greek *catapan* had ruled the provinces of southern Italy from the ninth century.

The building, architecture and sculpture of the church of S. Nicola at Bari have received thorough attention by both antiquarian and modern scholars. Gerardo Cioffari gives a thorough account of the construction and later embellishment of the church of S. Nicola in, for example, *Storia della basilica di S. Nicola di Bari*.[69] Cioffari makes extensive use of the authoritative *Codice Diplomatico Barese*, a multi-volume publication from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries which presents the entire collection of documents from the S. Nicola archive at Bari, grouped according to period.[70] These diverse documents are rich in details concerning the construction of the church and subsequent donations, honours and visits paid by kings, dignitaries and popes. Such information is also detailed in the antiquarian accounts of Antonio Beatillo.[71] In 1946 the church of S. Nicola was restored by the architect Franco Schettini, an undertaking which removed later building work from the façade of the church and allowed for a more thorough

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Norwich, *The Normans in the South* (London: Longmans, 1967). For details of the take-over of Bari, see Cioffari (1984), pp. 19-21.

[69] Cioffari (1984).

[70] There are 31 volumes of the *CDB* in total; vols 1-19 are concerned with Bari specifically, vols 20-31 with Puglia more generally.

[71] Antonio Beatillo, *Historia di Bari: principal città della Puglia nel Regno di Napoli* (Bologna: Forni, 1965; first published Naples: F. Savio, 1637); *Historia della vita, miracoli, traslatione, e gloria dell'illustrissimo confessore di Christo S. Nicolò, Arcivescovo di Mira, e Patrono della città di Bari* (Naples: Heredi di Tarquinio Longo, 1620). Book 7 discusses the building of the church of S. Nicola at Bari, the visit of Pope Urban II and his consecration of the crypt, and later involvement of the kings of Naples. These important antiquarian sources are used by modern scholars for the history of Bari and the church of S. Nicola, in particular who visited it and who gave donations. They should however be used with caution, as Beatillo does not always provide sufficient sources.

examination of the original external sculpture.[72] In *La basilica di San Nicola di Bari*, Schettini also provides a detailed chapter of the history of the construction of the church, and a technical discussion of the architecture.[73]

The construction of a shrine in which to venerate the newly acquired relics of St Nicholas was initiated immediately after their arrival by Abbot Elia (d.1105), originally the Abbot of the small Barese monastery of St Benedict. Building began with the construction of a subterranean crypt within the land previously used as the Court of the *Catapano*, in the heart of the Byzantine urban space and close to the harbour (Fig. 3.26).[74] Four small churches were demolished, and the crypt was built from the foundations of the Byzantine palace, asserting Norman dominance in the city.[75] The crypt was probably completed by 1089, when Pope Urban II was present at the translation of the body of St Nicholas into the crypt.[76]

The date of the completion of the church is uncertain, but can at least be narrowed down to the years 1094-1103.[77] The church was built in the Norman style,[78] although axial irregularities and an apparent lack of structural unity within the church has led scholars to speculate about possible deviations from an original plan for the church.[79] This was perhaps a result of the church

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[72] For example a sacristy and treasury, added in the 17th and 18th centuries, were removed during the restoration. See Schettini (1967), pp. 50-78, 95-109.

[73] Ibid., pp. 20-34, 41-49.

[74] Ibid., pp. 35-40.

[75] Demolition of the area to prepare for the new construction of the church was completed on 8 July 1087, just 2 months after the relics were brought to Bari on 9 May. See Cioffari (1984), p. 99.

[76] Nitti di Vito, ed. (1897), pp. 61-63, no. 33. See p. 63: ‘in translatione etiam beati confessoris domini Nicolay’.

[77] After 1094, documents referring to the church mention ‘ubi sancte reliquie eius iacent’, but are unclear about the state of completion of the church. The church must however have been completed before 1103, because an extant testament of this year by a Nicola Nauclerius indicates that 3 quarters of his estate should be left to the church of S. Nicola, ‘constructa intus hac predicta civitate Bari ubi sancte reliquie eius iacent’. See Nitti di Vito, ed. (1902), p. 63, no. 36. Cioffari suggests that the church may have been completed by 1098, in order to accommodate the 185 bishops present at the Council of Bari; see Cioffari (1984), p. 100. It seems remarkable, however, that the church could be fully complete within only 10 years of its inception; it is likely that only the crypt was complete at this time.

[78] The church imitates the Norman church of Saint-Nicolas at Caen. See Émile Bertaux, *L’art dans l’Italie méridionale: de la fin de l’empire romain à la conquête de Charles d’Anjou* (Paris: Editions E. De Boccard; Rome: École Française de Rome, 1968-78), vol. 1, p. 359. The plan of the church of S. Nicola, and its architectural and decorational features, will be discussed later in this chapter.

[79] See Gerardo Cioffari, *The Basilica of Saint Nicholas. A Short Historical Artistic Guide* (Bari: Levante, 1997), pp. 5-6: Krautheimer claims that a unified original plan is not possible, and that if there was one,

being built very quickly over less than two decades. Despite this haste, the church was only consecrated a century later, on 22 June 1197, by the Imperial Chancellor Conrad, Bishop of Hildesheim. Cioffari suggests that the consecration of the church at the time of its completion may not have been considered necessary as the consecration of an altar, as occurred in 1089 in the crypt of S. Nicola, and the presence of prestigious relics, were commonly considered sufficient.[80]

At the time of the construction of the church of S. Nicola, the town of Bari was flourishing as a port both for commerce and military activity, and had been the principal town for Greek, Lombard, Saracen and Norman rulers. As a result the town's population was diverse, comprising Greeks, Slavs, Armenians, Saracens and citizens from other Italian centres such as Venice and Pisa.[81] This complexity is reflected within the architecture and decoration of the church of S. Nicola, which incorporates sculpture and mosaic from the Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods of rule (Figs 3.27-3.29).[82] The church of S. Nicola was therefore both a symbol of the importance of the cult of St Nicholas to the town of Bari, and a visual expression of the diversity of its population.

Norman association with the cult of St Nicholas in Bari had clear political connotations. The new church of S. Nicola, built by the Norman rulers from the foundations of the old Greek palace, effectively replaced the stronghold of Byzantine power in the town, asserting the position of the Normans as the new ruling authority and the victors over the Byzantine Empire. This

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later building work deviated considerably from it; see Richard Krautheimer, 'San Nicola in Bari und die Apulische Architektur des 12 Jahrhunders', *WJK* 9 (1934), pp. 5-42. On the other hand, Schettini maintains that the church follows its original plan, which was an adaption of the plan of the *catapano* palace; Schettini (1967), p. 35-40.

[80] Cioffari (1984), p. 185. Reasons for the delay in the consecration of the basilica are difficult to determine because of the scarcity of documentation from this period. Incredibly, there are no documents from the Archivio di S. Nicola about this significant event in the history of the church.

[81] Belli d'Elia (1980), pp. 20-21. During the rule of Frederick II and later, relations with other Italian maritime centres were created and renewed, in particular Venice, Pisa and Amalfi. See Bronzini (1989), p. 5.

[82] Cioffari (1997), pp. 3-4. The tomb of Abbot Elia (d.1105) is thought to be of the imperial period (3rd-4th century) and displays 4 philosophers in togas; from the Longobard period (8th-9th century) is the *plutei* of the lion rampant and the sphinx, now in the Matron's Gallery; the apse floor mosaic with a monogram of Allah is the work of Islamic artisans, and from the Byzantine period there remain spoils from the old *catapan* residence including a stone relief of a teaching angel.

statement of power is an example of how the cult of St Nicholas came to play a principal role in the life and identity of the city. Later Norman monarchs further advanced the political role of St Nicholas; this can be witnessed in the twelfth-century enamel plaque depicting King Roger II of Sicily being crowned by St Nicholas, described in Chapter Two (Fig. 2.10). This large plaque was probably produced in Sicily around the year 1132 using the *champlevé* enamel technique, and is one of the largest enamel plaques surviving from the Middle Ages.[83] In the second half of the twelfth century the plaque was placed publicly, and highly visibly, on the canopy of the ciborium located above the high altar of the church of S. Nicola at Bari, in commemoration of the king's 1130 coronation by the Antipope Anacletus II (Fig. 3.30).[84] Roger II was a wise king who carefully balanced and promoted the contrasting cultures thriving within his kingdom – Latin, Greek and Arab – so that his rulership could be recognized by all.[85] Representing the king being crowned by a popular eastern saint (St Nicholas wears eastern episcopal clothing on the plaque, although with a Latin crosier) may have eased the acceptance of his rulership by the Greek population of southern Italy. The plaque resembles a contemporary mosaic panel in the church of the Martorana, Palermo, in which Roger II is crowned by Christ (Fig. 3.31).[86] St Nicholas also appeared on the coins of Roger II, and within the mosaics of the king's private palace chapel in Palermo, the Cappella Palatina (Fig. 2.9).[87]

The Norman rulers donated precious offerings to the new church of S. Nicola at Bari. One particularly interesting gift was given by Boemond (1058-1111), the Prince of Antioch and

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[83] The plaque measures 24.4 cm x 23.4 cm. See Bacci, ed. (2006), p. 259, for the possible locations of its production, which include Bari, Limoges, or a Saracen workshop.

[84] The original enamel plaque has been replaced by a replica, and can now be seen in the church's treasury. For the treasury, see Melchiorre (1993). For the coronation of Roger II, see Hubert Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler Between East and West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 30-59.

[85] For the rule of Roger II, see Tronzo (1997).

[86] For the mosaic of Christ crowning Roger II in the church of St Mary's of the Admiral, Palermo (commonly referred to as the Martorana), see Ernst Kitzinger, *The Mosaics of St. Mary's of the Admiral in Palermo* (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1990), pp. 189-97.

[87] See Engel (1972), pp. 37-39; Pertusi (1978), p. 14. At the Cappella Palatina, St Nicholas is represented alongside the Greek Fathers Sts Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil and John Chrysostom on the north wall of the north transept. See Demus (1950), p. 43.

eldest son of Robert Guiscard, who led a Norman army on the First Crusade and eventually captured the city of Antioch.[88] During the 1098 struggle for Antioch, Boemond defeated the Arab leader Kerbogha, or Corbarab; it was Kerbogha's curtain which Boemond donated to the church of S. Nicola as an *ex voto* gift.[89] This curtain was a symbol of victory; following the capture of Antioch the crusading armies were able to liberate Jerusalem from its Muslim occupiers.[90] By offering such a significant prize to the church of S. Nicola, the saint became associated with the crusading victories, reflecting the saint's own reputation as a defender against heresy.[91] The Norman rulers evidently felt that St Nicholas's church was an appropriate context in which to publicise their military victories, reinforcing the tradition that St Nicholas offered protection to the Normans through his patronage, and that it was to this saint that thanks should be offered.

Outside Bari in the year 1098 or 1099, Boemond provided the financial aid to either found or restore the monastery of S. Nicola di Casole near Otranto.[92] As mentioned above, Grazio Gianfreda suggests that there were political motives behind Boemond's benefaction of the monastery. The building contrasted with the existing Greek rock-cut monasteries in the region; manuscripts survive detailing the construction of Boemond's monastery from masonry, and record that the monument also included a bell tower, library and scriptorium.[93] Boemond also imposed new canonical rules upon the monks, effectively dismissing the orthodox rites that had been practised in the region since the early years of Byzantine rule. In doing so, the Norman ruler imposed his authority upon a portion of the Greek population in Puglia, reflecting the control the monarchy was gradually gaining in the whole of southern Italy. Although Byzantine rule had

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[88] For Boemond and the Norman siege of Antioch, see the chapter by Jean-Yves Marin, 'Boemond di Taranto', in *Le crociate: l'Oriente e l'Occidente da Urbano II a San Luigi: 1096-1270*, ed. Monique Rey-Delqué (Milan: Electa, 1997), pp. 152-54.

[89] Melchiorre (1993), p. 5.

[90] For the First Crusade and the recapturing of Jerusalem, see the chapter by Michel Balard in Monique Rey-Delqué, ed. (1997), pp. 3-8.

[91] According to the c.900 Greek life of St Nicholas, the *Synaxarium*, the saint attended the 325 Council of Nicaea where he opposed Arianism. See Anrich (1913-17), vol. 1, p. 205; Ševčenko (1983), p. 18, fn. 3.

[92] According to a document at Turin, Università di Torino, Cod. Torinese, C111, as in Gianfreda (1994), p. 83.

[93] For details of the manuscripts, see Gianfreda (1994), pp. 77-85; Jones (1978), p. 222.

ended following the Norman conquest of Bari, Greek traditions continued to flourish in the region; Boemond's monastery may have been a means of asserting control over the vestiges of orthodoxy within his kingdom.[94] Gianfreda also notes that the Norman addition of 'Casole' to the name of the monastery can be translated as either 'curtain' or 'hut'.[95] This could be in reference to the many grottos located on the same hill as the monastery; it is significant, however, that the monastery was constructed by the same Norman ruler who donated the curtain of his enemy Kerbogha to the church of S. Nicola at Bari.

The support given to the cult of St Nicholas in Bari and Puglia by the Norman monarchy was continued by the succeeding rulers of the region. On 22 June 1197, Bishop Conrad of Hildesheim consecrated the church of S. Nicola in the presence of many prelates, bishops and archbishops, as well as numerous German crusaders departing from Bari for the Fourth Crusade.[96] In the same year, Bishop Conrad had signed at Barletta a charter of exemptions for the church of S. Nicola in Bari.[97] In the thirteenth century the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II (1220-50), grandson of King Roger II of Sicily, took control of southern Italy.[98] The emperor called the church 'nostra specialis … Capella', giving it ecclesiastical autonomy as well as privileges and possessions, and reducing the customs that the town of Bari was obliged to pay to the emperor.[99] Frederick II's illegitimate son, King Manfred of Sicily (1258-66), also favoured the shrine at

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[94] As argued by Gianfreda (1994), pp. 77-85.

[95] It is not known if a monastery dedicated to St Nicholas pre-existed Boemond's construction. Because the monastery's archives were also destroyed during the 1480 Turkish raids, it is not known at what precise date the word 'Casole' was added to the monastery's name, although the term certainly did not exist before the 11th-century Norman monastery. See Gianfreda (1994), pp. 78-80.

[96] A 13th-century inscription located on the west façade of the church of S. Nicola records this event: see Cioffari (1984), p. 187; Meisen (1931), p. 101. For the Fourth Crusade see Rey-Delqué, ed. (1997), pp. 15-21.

[97] See Niccolò Putignani, *Vindiciae vitae et Gestorum S. Thaumaturgi Nicolai, archiepiscopi myrensis* (Naples: Stamperia Raimondiana, 1757), vol. 2, p. 357, as in Meisen (1931), p. 101.

[98] See Houben (2002).

[99] Francesco Nitti di Vito, ed., *CDB. Volume VI: Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Bari. Periodo Svevo (1195-1266)* (Bari: Vecchi, 1906), pp. 53-55, no. 33. See also Cioffari (1984), pp. 196-201.

Bari. Manfred donated sixty pounds of wax to be made into candles for the feast day of the translation of the saint's relics (9 May), to be paid from the customs income of the port of Bari.[100]

When Charles of Anjou (1226-85) invaded southern Italy to claim the crown of Sicily in 1265, and later defeated the army of Manfred of Sicily in the Battle of Benevento, Swabian rule in Bari was replaced by Angevin, and the seat of power was shifted from Bari to Naples.[101] The court of Naples was responsible for extensive and varied building works. A great concern of King Charles II (1285-1309) was the creation of a sense of unified identity, particularly in the multi-cultural and -lingual regions of southern Italy, through his many architectural projects.[102] The Angevin kings were important in the development of the cult of the saints in southern Italy, as they endowed the shrines of the Archangel Michael at Monte S. Angelo, and of S. Gennaro in Naples, with reliquaries or large-scale construction projects.[103] Most significantly, the church of S. Nicola at Bari entered a very prosperous phase. The Introduction to this thesis has mentioned some examples of the benefaction of the Angevin kings. Charles of Anjou declared the church of S. Nicola a royal monument and gave to it the gift of a bell. Charles II donated three castles to the church and built a treasury, in which he deposited many precious metalwork gifts, codices and reliquaries (Fig. 3.32).[104] Other members of the Angevin court were also important patrons:

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[100] Nitti di Vito, ed. (1906), p. 175, no. 106; Meisen (1931), pp. 100-02.

[101] For Angevin rule in southern Italy, see Abulafia (1997), esp. pp. 57-82 for Charles of Anjou.

[102] This is argued by Bruzelius (2004), p. viii.

[103] Bruzelius (2004), pp. 6, 37-40. For Angevin building works at Monte S. Angelo, see Mariani (1992), pp. 25-30. Charles II visited Gargano 4 times between 1267 and 1273. In 1271 he ordered the repair of the road leading from Manfredonia to Monte S. Angelo to assist pilgrims travelling there. At the same time he built a new entrance for the grotto, which was entirely rebuilt in the 18th century, and a new staircase, of which the original 13th-century structure survives. An octagonal tower was also added to the site and bears an inscription of the king's benefaction.

[104] A document dated 1296, published by Nitti di Vito, records the gifts donated by Charles II to the treasury: 'Item Missale unum in tribus voluminibus, videlicet Missale per se, Evangelia per se, et Epistole per se, sine aliqua nota…Item crociam unam de argento, cum baculo cohoperto de argento…Item Vas quoddam argenteum cum cohopertorio et pede, et cum lapidibus, pernis, et smaltis de opera Venetiarum pro reliquiis conservandis ... Item duo magna Candelabra de cristallo, munita argento, ad opus Venetiarum.' Nitti di Vito, ed. (1936), p. 101, no. 72. The earliest surviving inventory of the treasury is dated 1361, and mentions: 'Ymago una…de argento deaurato cum fede eneo deaurato. xmaltata ad arma Regalia cum mitra aurea et anulo ornate lapidibus principis videlicet'; 'Cruces due magne de argento deaurato cum pedibus ereis deauratis ad arma Regalia ornate magnis lapidibus preciosis grossis', Francesco Nitti di Vito, ed., *CDB. Volume XVIII: Le Pergamene di S. Nicola di Bari. Periodo Angioino (1343-1381)* (Bari: Vecchi, 1950), p. 131, no. 74. See also Melchiorre (1993) for the treasury inventories.

Bartolomeo of Capua, a counsellor and confidant of Charles II, founded a chapel of St Nicholas in Capua, commonly known as S. Nicola a Logetata.[105]

PILGRIMAGE IN PUGLIA

The shrine of St Nicholas at Bari received generous benefaction from the ruling families of southern Italy. It also attracted pilgrims and visitors from across the Latin West. As a successful pilgrimage site the church of S. Nicola at Bari had a significant impact upon pilgrimage within the region of Puglia; at the same time, the location of the town on an established pilgrimage route contributed to the shrine's success. This section explores the relationship between the shrine at Bari and wider patterns of pilgrimage in Puglia.

When the relics of St Nicholas were brought to Bari, his cult was introduced to a region with a long history of important shrines, where pilgrimage had long been established and local devotion to saints was prolific. On the Gargano peninsular north of Bari, the shrine of Monte S. Angelo had been drawing pilgrims to the region since at least the eighth century, following the fifth-century apparitions of the Archangel Michael upon the mountain of Gargano.[106] The *via dell'Angelo* leading to Monte S. Angelo was a small, if demanding, diversion off the major pilgrimage routes leading south from Rome and central Italy. These routes, for example the *via Appia Traiana* and the *via sacra Langobardorum*, led travellers to the ports of Puglia from where they could set sail for the Holy Land.[107] The popularity of Monte S. Angelo as a pilgrimage

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[105] See Bruzelius (2004), p. 160.

[106] The earliest testaments detailing pilgrimage to Monte S. Angelo date to the 8th century; see Mario Sensi, 'Pelligrinaggi votive e vicari alla fine del medioevo: l'esempio umbro', *BF* 16 (1992), p. 22. The sanctuary of Monte S. Angelo is built upon the traditional site of 3 apparitions of the Archangel Michael, in 490, 492 and 493, and a later apparition in 663. See Bollandists, *AASS* (Brussels: Society of Bollandists, 1902-70), vol. 8, Sept., pp. 76-79. The cave sanctuary became internationally important during Lombard rule, surviving later Saracen attacks and receiving increasing benefaction from subsequent rulers. For pilgrimage to the shrine at Monte S. Angelo, see works by Giorgio Otranto, including *Il santuario di S. Michele Arcangelo sul Gargano dalle origini al 20 secolo* (Bari: Edipuglia, 1990).

[107] For the pilgrimage routes leading to Puglia, see *L'angelo, la montagna, il pellegrino: Monte Sant'Angelo e il santuario di San Michele del Gargano: archeologia, arte, culto, devozione dalle origini ai nostri giorni* (exhibition catalogue, Museo 'G. Trancredi', Monte Sant'Angelo, 25 Sept.-5 Nov. 1999), ed. Pina Belli d'Elia (Foggia: Claudio Grenzi, 1999), pp. 112-17; Sensi (1992), p. 21.

destination rivalled the shrines of Rome and of St James at Compostela.[108] The shrine of the archangel would often be visited in conjunction with other sites, including the tombs of the apostles and martyrs at Rome, on a journey referred to as the *Iter Magnum*.[109] Other important shrines in Puglia which attracted pilgrims to the region – as well as those en route to the Holy Land – included the shrine of St Leonard at Siponto at the foot of Monte S. Angelo;[110] the tomb at Canosa of St Sabinus, the sixth-century bishop of that town about forty kilometres south-east of Foggia,[111] and the circa-fifth-century sanctuary of Sta Maria di Leuca at the tip of Puglia.[112] Further afield were the apostolic shrines of St Bartholomew at Benevento and St Matthew at the cathedral of Salerno, just south-east of Naples.[113]

From the end of the eleventh century, the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari became one of the most important shrines not just in southern Italy, but in the whole of Latin Christendom. In the years immediately following the 1087 translation, pilgrims began to flock to the town to venerate

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[108] In Mario Sensi's statistics regarding the destinations of pilgrims from Umbria, Gargano was by far the most popular destination, even more so than Rome and Compostela. Sensi gathered statistical information regarding the destinations of pilgrimages, including pilgrimages completed, and those requested, i.e. vicarious, from archival testaments in the state archives at Foligno. In the notarial testaments of Bartolomeo di Giovanni Germani (1428-39), for example, 62 testaments contained references to pilgrimages completed and requested, of which 58 name Gargano, 28 mention Rome, and 8 mention Compostela. See Sensi (1992), p. 17.

[109] The *Iter Magnum*, as mentioned in the notarial testaments published by Sensi, could refer to any combination of the following shrines: Rome (the tombs of Sts Peter and Paul, the apostles and martyrs); Gargano (Monte S. Angelo); Bari (St Nicholas); Monte Virgine (sanctuary of the Virgin); Montecassino (the shrine of St Benedict); Sta Maria de Mariumbus (sanctuary of the Virgin). The later addition of Bari to the tour will be discussed below. See Sensi (1992), p. 28.

[110] For the shrine and cult of St Leonard, see Richardson (2007).

[111] The relics of St Sabinus were stolen from Canosa and brought to the cathedral of Bari sometime between 872 and 876. In the following centuries, there was much contention between the cathedrals of Canosa and Bari as to who possessed the true relics. For further information, and details of the cathedral of Canosa, see Ann Wharton Epstein, 'The Date and Significance of the Cathedral of Canosa in Apulia, South Italy', *DOP* 37 (1983), pp. 79-90.

[112] For Sta Maria di Leuca, see Salvatore Palese, *Il santuario 'de finibus terrae' di S. Maria di Leuca* (Bari: Edipuglia, 1999).

[113] For the shrine of St Matthew at Salerno, see Amalia Galdi, 'Il santo e la città: il culto di S. Matteo a Salerno tra X e XVI secolo', *Rassegna storica salernitana* 13, no. 1, new series (Jun. 1996), pp. 21-92. For Benevento, see Almerico Meomartini, *I monumenti e le opera d'arte della città di Benevento. Lavoro storico, artistico, critico* (Benevento: Tipigrafia di Luigi de Martini e Figlio, 1889), pp. 395-472.

the sacred bones of St Nicholas.[114] The translation accounts of Niceforo and John the Deacon discussed above provide information about the earliest pilgrims to the shrine. Niceforo describes how the translation occurred on Saturday 9 May, and on the following Tuesday people from within the town of Bari, and representatives of the mariners involved in the rescue of the body, came to venerate the saint. On the Wednesday, pilgrims came from neighbouring towns such as Trani, Bitonto and Taranto; on the Thursday St Nicholas appeared in a vision to a local monk, and on the Friday, the bishops from neighbouring dioceses arrived.[115] Meanwhile, the saint proved his worth by performing miracles at his new resting place: John the Deacon mentions the healing of a man from Ancona and a bishop from Camerino in the Marches.[116] The translation accounts show the importance of local pilgrimage within Puglia for establishing the shrine at Bari as a pilgrimage destination.

In subsequent centuries, the church of S. Nicola experienced enormous popularity, and the shrine joined that of the Archangel Michael as part of the *Iter Magnum*. Around the year 1365, St Bridget of Sweden undertook a pilgrimage to southern Italy specifically to visit the shrines of St Michael at Gargano, St Nicholas at Bari, the Apostle Bartholomew at Benevento, and the Evangelist St Matthew at Salerno.[117] A notarial document dated 1406 from the state archives at Foligno, identified by Mario Sensi, states, 'I request on my behalf a journey to S. Angelo of Monte Gargano, and to St Nicholas of Bari, and to St Mary of Monte Virgine, which is called iter magnum'.[118] This is an example of vicarious pilgrimage, a category of pilgrimage that was carried out *post mortem*, on behalf of a testator. Vicarious pilgrimages were a popular means

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[114] For pilgrimage to the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari, see Vito Antonio Melchiorre, 'I pellegrinaggi alla basilica', in *San Nicola di Bari e la sua basilica. Culto, arte, tradizione*, ed. Giorgio Otranto (Milan: Electa, 1987), pp. 337-45.

[115] Corsi (1988), pp. 40-41.

[116] Giovanni Arcidiacono (1618), as in Cioffari (1984), p. 79.

[117] F.R. Jonathan Abergale, 'The Pilgrimages of Saint Bridget of Sweden', in *Saint Bridget, Prophetess of New ages* (Proceedings of the International Study Meeting, Rome, 3-7 Oct. 1991), p. 921.

[118] 'item reliquit pro uno itinere fiendo ad S. Angelum de Monte Galgano et ad S. Nicolam de Bari et ad S. Mariam de Monte Virgine, quod vocatur iter magnum'. Author's translation. This document is a testament by Vangelo Massuri from the notarial fondo of Francesco Pucciarelli (1404-6): Foligno, Archivio di Stato (hereafter cited as ASFg), Fondo notarile, 113, Francesco Pucciarelli (1404-06), c. 98, as in Sensi (1992), p. 75.

for fulfilling vows and for the salvation of the soul; testaments provide good reference points for vicarious pilgrimage as money was often left in wills for this purpose.[119]

The value of notarial documents for containing evidence pertaining to vicarious pilgrimage has been recognised in recent research, for example in the study by Mario Sensi cited above. While research in this area is increasing, it is also sporadic, and only limited urban centres have been covered. Chapter Four will discuss a study of vicarious pilgrimage carried out in the state archives at Treviso;[120] research for this chapter has been advanced by work on testaments from the state archives at Dubrovnik by Donal Cooper.[121] Notarial testaments can be a problematic source for extracting historical information as they contain very specific elements of data. For example, while occasionally the poor did make wills, vicarious pilgrimage was generally limited to those with the resources to fund it; testaments can therefore only give a very general impression of the pilgrimage patterns of the wealthier classes. Vicarious testaments are also a very crude barometer for assessing the spread of devotion to a particular saint, because pilgrimage destinations were influenced by other factors, in particular the Jubilee years.[122] However, research is naturally limited by what survives, and these testaments provide an accessible means for assessing which shrines were favoured, or ignored, by certain communities. The document quoted above is just one of many identified by Sensi in which pilgrims from central Italy were asked to visit the shrines of Puglia.[123]

The majority of the pilgrimage testaments and accounts relating to the Puglian shrines have a significant common factor: visits to Bari were generally part of a longer journey, whether

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[119] For further information, see Sensi (1992).

[120] See Giampaolo Cagnin, *Pellegrini e vie del pellegrinaggio a Treviso nel medioveo (secoli XII-XV)* (Vicenza: Associazione veneta per la storia locale, 2000).

[121] I am grateful to Donal Cooper for bringing to my attention a document from the Državni archiv u Dubrovniku, in which a certain Nikola Lukarić leaves money for priests to go to the shrines of Puglia. This document will be discussed below.

[122] Any discussion of pilgrimage from the 14th century onwards must take into account the great Roman Jubilees first established in 1300 by Pope Boniface VIII. In addition, at the end of the 13th century the plenary indulgence of the *Perdono* was confirmed for those visiting Assisi. See Gloria Fossi, et al, eds, *La storia dei giubilei: 1300-1423* (Florence: Giunti, 1997-2000); Mario Sensi, *Il Perdono di Assisi* (Assisi: Porziuncola, 2002), pp. 17-48; Cagnin (2000), p. 66.

[123] Others can be seen in Sensi (1992), for example, on p. 77.

as part of the *Iter Magnum*, or as a stop between Rome and the Holy Land. Monte S. Angelo was an obligatory stop for pilgrims on this long-established route, and Bari, which was located on this route between Gargano and the Puglian ports further south, became an additional stop.[124] In the mid-thirteenth century Matthew of Paris passed through Bari on his pilgrimage from London to Jerusalem, before setting sail from Brindisi.[125] Bari itself was a major port for pilgrims travelling to the east: the pilgrim Saewulf, travelling to Jerusalem in the years 1102-03, mentions Bari, alongside Siponto, Barletta and Trani, as particularly good ports for departure to the Holy Land.[126] In 1212, a companion of St Francis, Brother Egidio, undertook a pilgrimage that took him to Compostela, Monte S. Angelo and Bari, before he set sail for the Holy Land.[127] A particularly detailed account of pilgrimage in Puglia is given by a mid-twelfth-century Icelander named Abbot Nikulás, who travelled from Iceland to Jerusalem, via Rome.[128] After stopping at Benevento, Abbot Nikulás travelled to Gargano, then to Bari, from where he sailed to Albania.[129] From Gargano, Abbot Nikulás recorded that it was one day's journey to Barletta, then six miles to Trani, four to Bisceglie, four to Molfetta, four to Giovanazzo, then six to Bari.[130] The location of the shrine of St Nicholas en route to Jerusalem is fitting, as according to legend St Nicholas himself undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.[131]

The exposure given to the cult of St Nicholas by pilgrims passing through Bari would have increased the saint's reputation within the wider Christian community. Equally, the many

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[124] Giorgio Otranto, 'San Nicola conteso: santuari e pellegrinaggi nel vissuto cristiano', in *Profili giuridici e storia dei santuari cristiani in Italia*, eds Gaetano Dammacco and Giorgio Otranto (Bari: Edipuglia, 2004), p. 122. See also Renato Stopani, *Le grandi vie di pellegrinaggio del medioevo. Le strade per Roma* (Florence: Centro Studi Romei, 1986), for pilgrimage routes to Rome (in particular from northern Europe).

[125] Konrad Miller, *Mappae Mundi: die ältesten Weltkarten* (Stuttgart: Jos. Roth'sche Verlagshandlung, 1895-98), pp. 89-90. See also Stopani (1986), p. 26.

[126] Brownlow, trans. (1892), p. 1.

[127] Marcelli (2006), p. 145.

[128] See Joyce Hill, 'From Rome to Jerusalem: An Icelandic Itinerary of the Mid-Twelfth Century', *HTR* 76, no. 2 (Apr. 1983), pp. 175-203.

[129] Hill (1983), pp. 178-79.

[130] Ibid., p. 178.

[131] This legend does not appear in the *Legenda Aurea*, and thus may not have been well-known in the Latin West. It is mentioned in the Greek *Vita Nicolai Sionitae*; *Vita per Metaphrasten*; *Encomium Neophyti*, and *Vita Lycio-Alexandrina*. See also Ševčenko (1983), p. 95.

monuments dedicated to the saint elsewhere in the region, and along the pilgrimage routes, as well as the visual references to the cult (as seen at Gargano, for example),[132] would also have achieved this. Evidence of the success of the shrine at Bari, and how the reputation of the saint spread, can be seen in the many churches dedicated to him both within the region, and in the wider context of Italy. By the later Middle Ages many parish churches, cathedrals, monastic establishments, palace chapels and even hospitals were rededicated to this saint, particularly after the translation of his relics to Bari. The thirteenth- and fourteenth-century *Rationes Decimarum Italiae* show a great number of churches and altars dedicated to St Nicholas in Puglia,[133] as do the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Apostolic Visitations to Puglia.[134] My study of the Puglian Visitations has revealed churches and altars dedicated to St Nicholas in the towns of Alessano,[135] Bitonto,[136] Castellaneta,[137] Monopoli,[138] Oria,[139] Ostuni,[140] and Taranto.[141]

Bari clearly became an established stop on major pilgrimage routes; however, determining whether the shrine of St Nicholas was also a pilgrimage destination in its own right is problematic. My research has uncovered little evidence for this. A document from the state archives at Dubrovnik gives details of Nikola Lukarić's desire that a presbyter should go to the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari and sing a mass there on his behalf, as well as in his own St Nicholas chapel previously built within a Dominican church in Dubrovnik.[142] This request exemplifies

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[132] See p. 64, fn. 160, above.

[133] For the *Rationes Decimarum* for Puglia, see Domenico Vendola, ed., *Apulia, Lucania, Calabria (con tre grandi carte topografiche* (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1939).

[134] Apostolic Visitations do not survive from all Puglian urban centres. Of the 9 that survive, 7 locations contain evidence of churches or altarpieces dedicated to St Nicholas. Visitations that contain no reference to St Nicholas are those for Altamura and Cerignola.

[135] ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 154, Alessano (1628), fol. 16v; altar.

[136] ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 163, Bitonto (1631), fol. 16r; church.

[137] ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 161, Castellaneta (1630), fol. 10v; cathedral chapel.

[138] ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 101, Monopoli (1582-83), fol. 50r; church.

[139] ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 139, Oria, date unknown, fol. 103v; church.

[140] ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 155, Ostuni (1628), fol. 18v; church.

[141] ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 73, Taranto (1576); fol. 60v; church.

[142] 'et yperperi x pro uno dupplerio quod portat unus presbiter ad sanctam Nicolam de Bari et cantet unuam missam in ecclesia sancti Nicole … Et fratres teneantur michi pro ebdomodo cantare omni die unam missam et unam missam de conventu in die sancti Nicolai ad quam cappella est nomenatum', Državni archiv u Dubrovniku, Testamenta de notaria 3, fol. 33v, as in Jorjo Tadić, *Grada o slikarskoj školi*

personal devotion to a namesaint. Another testament, from the state archives at Foligno dated 1454, provides evidence for a pilgrimage to Bari which does not include other shrines in Puglia.[143] This scarcity of evidence does not necessarily imply that pilgrims did not frequently select the shrine at Bari as the focus of their journey. The different categories of pilgrimage, including those to the Holy Land, vicarious pilgrimage requested posthumously through testaments, and penitential or local pilgrimages,[144] were not all recorded with equal frequency or attention to detail. Vicarious pilgrimage, for example, is a category we have some information about, because the requests are mentioned in testaments. Long travels to Jerusalem and Compostela were detailed in many pilgrims' diaries and guides, but local pilgrimages, especially those undertaken by the illiterate, were not recorded. A complete picture of pilgrimage patterns concerning a particular shrine is therefore very difficult to determine; nevertheless, the general impression that can be gleaned from the evidence available suggests that the location of Bari on a major pilgrimage route, and the town's function as a port, were beyond doubt a crucial reason for the success of the shrine of St Nicholas.

This raises an important point: to say that the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari was one of the most popular in the Latin West is problematic, because while it is accurate to say that the shrine's success was phenomenal, a major reason for this was the church's location en route to nearby, long-established important shrines. Current scholarship has drawn awareness to the important role that many shrines along pilgrimage routes played in attracting pilgrims and visitors en route elsewhere. For example, the recent thesis by Jessica Richardson discusses the shrine of St Leonard at Siponto, which pilgrims frequently visited en route to Monte S. Angelo at Gargano.[145] Would the shrine of St Leonard have proved so successful if it was not located on the way to the

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u Dubrovniku XIII-XVI vek (Belgrade: SAN, 1952), vol. 1, p. 353, no. 733. See Donal Cooper, 'Gothic Art and the Friars in Late Medieval Croatia 1213-1460', in *Croatia. Aspects of Art, Architecture and Cultural Heritage*, ed. John Julius Norwich, et al (London: Frances Lincoln, 2009), pp. 86-88.

[143] ASFg, Fondo notarile, 104, Paolo Germani (1449-51), as in Sensi (1992), p. 53.

[144] Sensi discusses the differences between penitential and voluntary pilgrimage in Sensi (1992), pp. 7-8.

[145] The thesis by Richardson (2007), brings the reader's attention to the popularity of this saint's shrine in Puglia, and the fact that devotion to this lesser-known saint in fact followed established patterns of local devotion within Puglia, as seen at the shrines of St Cataldus at Taranto, and St Secundinus at Troia.

grotto of St Michael? The sanctuaries of the saints in southern Italy were interrelated and perhaps, in some cases, dependent upon one another. While the success of the shrine at Bari was in part due to the popularity of the saint, and the shrine would have attracted visitors to the region, this success should also be attributed in part to the proximity of other important shrines nearby, in particular Monte S. Angelo.

The relationship between the shrines of St Nicholas at Bari and Monte S. Angelo at Gargano is important to consider because of the role of the Gargano shrine in drawing pilgrims to southern Italy. As seen above, the proximity of the shrines at Monte S. Angelo and Bari together attracted pilgrims to the region.[146] It is evident, however, that the shrine at Bari also impacted upon the pilgrimage sites of the Gargano peninsular, which became an important centre for the cult of St Nicholas: along the *via sacra Langobardorum*, the road leading from Rome to Monte S. Angelo, were several stopping places with monasteries dedicated to St Nicholas, for example S. Nicola al Pantano on the Gargano peninsular, whose functions included giving respite to pilgrims.[147] Once at Gargano St Nicholas is prominent in the thirteenth-century frescoes of the church of Sta Maria Maggiore, located very close to the shrine of St Michael.[148] Here St Nicholas appears twice on the west wall, once as a full-length, Latin bishop alongside St Bartholomew to the left of the main entrance, and again as a full-length orthodox bishop saint to the right, accompanied on the left by three scenes from his life (Figs 2.11, 3.33).[149] The lower of these

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[146] Another example of this is a 14th-century testament from the state archives at Florence, transcribed by Donal Cooper, which contains an example of vicarious, post-mortem pilgrimage. In this testament the author, 'Iohanazzus olim Cissci Cambii', from the town of Sansepolcro, expresses the desire that a pilgrim should visit the churches of St Michael at Gargano and St Nicholas at Bari: 'Item disponit voluit et reliquit quod de bonis suis pro eius anima mictatur et micti debeat ad ecclesiam montis sancti Michaelis Angeli et ad ecclesiam sancti Nicolai de Bara unum pedes pro anima sua'. ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 16187, Paolo di Ciuccio, f. 75r.

[147] For pilgrimage routes to Gargano, including the *via sacra Langobardorum*, see *L'angelo, la montagna, il pellegrino* (1999), esp. pp. 112-17.

[148] Work began on the Church of Sta Maria Maggiore at Monte S. Angelo in the year 1198. The structure was incorporated into the existing building complex of the church of S. Pietro, located in front of the grotto of S. Michele. See *L'angelo, la montagna, il pellegrino* (1999), pp. 106-11. For the fresco decoration of Sta Maria Maggiore, see Mariani (1992), pp. 52-55.

[149] There may have originally been more scenes, but the fresco is badly damaged, and only 3 are visible today.

scenes represents *The Three Destitute Maidens*: St Nicholas is represented in the act of passing a bag of gold to the maidens' sleeping father (Fig. 3.34). I have identified the two remaining scenes as episodes of *Adeodatus*. The fresco is badly damaged, but identifiable remaining elements suggest this identification: the same internal setting of a table with seated figures is visible in both scenes, implying two episodes of the same story. In the top scene a boy is holding a jug in front of the table, and behind him a pair of feet and the lower half of a bishop's garments appear to be hovering, suggesting St Nicholas has swooped into the scene to grab Adeodatus by the hair as he serves at his captors' table (Fig. 3.35). In the bottom scene St Nicholas's head is visible to the right of the scene, but Adeodatus cannot be seen due to damage (Fig. 3.36). From what does survive, it is clear that the scenes represent St Nicholas's rescue of Adeodatus and his return to his parents.

Monte S. Angelo would therefore have been an important site for pilgrims devoted to St Nicholas. This suggests that close relationships existed between the shrines of Puglia, not only in terms of drawing pilgrims to the region, and thus to other sites nearby, but also in the spiritual experiences they could offer. In conclusion, in order to understand the impact of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari upon pilgrimage in the region of Puglia, the shrine must be considered within the wider contexts of other local shrines and international pilgrimage. Other factors such as location and contemporary events, in particular the crusades (discussed below), are also important. It cannot be doubted that the location of Bari on one of the main pilgrimage routes to the East played an important part in the success of the shrine, and in turn of the saint's cult in Italy. While Monte S. Angelo was perhaps the most important shrine for pilgrims visiting Puglia, the shrine of St Nicholas had another, unique role, building upon the existing cult of the saint in the region, and responding to the needs of seafarers to the East.

ST NICHOLAS AND THE SEA

As the town of Bari was a port, exposure to the cult of St Nicholas was not restricted to pilgrims, but included all those departing from and arriving in Bari for any reason, in particular the merchants and sailors who had a permanent presence in the town. At the end of the eleventh century, however, the role of Bari as a thriving port town became more significant with the initiation of the First Crusade.

In 1095 Pope Urban II led an army of crusaders to Palestine, with the aim of conquering the Holy Land and reclaiming eastern Christian territories from their Islamic rulers.[150] The ports of Puglia and southern Italy were chosen for the point of departure for the crusading fleets because they provided the fastest and most direct sea route to the East, a journey fraught with the dangers of Arab pirates and storms.[151] The First Crusade thus brought an additional volume of travellers through the port of Bari, increasing exposure to the newly-established shrine of St Nicholas. Conversely, the presence of the church of S. Nicola may have influenced the crusaders' choice of port, particularly those with a personal devotion to St Nicholas. The chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres reports that in late November 1096 a group of crusaders, including Count Robert of Normandy, stopped to pray in the church of S. Nicola before setting sail for the Holy Land.[152] In September 1107 Bohemond, son of Robert Guiscard and a leader of the First Crusade, visited the shrine at Bari to pray for the success of the Crusade before assembling his forces and departing from the port of Brindisi for Albania on 9 October.[153]

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[150] For a detailed introduction to the crusades, including the role played by Italian towns, see Rey-Delqué, ed. (1997).

[151] Cioffari (1984), p. 88. Many ports were involved in the First Crusade, including those at Monopoli, Trani, Barletta and Otranto. See Raffaele Iorio, 'Il trasporto dei crociati: la Puglia', in Rey-Delqué, ed. (1997), p. 226. For incidences at sea involving pirates, see Raffaella Cassano, et al, eds, *Andar per mare: Puglia e Mediterraneo tra mito e storia* (Bari: Mario Adda: Consorzio Idria, 1998), pp. 336-37.

[152] See Martha Evelyn McGinty, trans., *Fulcher of Chartres. Chronicle of the First Crusade (Fulcheri Carnotensis Historia Hierosolymitana)* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 25.

[153] According to Fulcher of Chartres and the Byzantine Princess, Anna Comnena, who mistakenly records Bari as the port of departure. See Fulcherius Carnotensis, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, ed. Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg: Carl Winters, 1913), pp. 519-20; Anna Comnena, *Alexias*, eds L. Schopen and A. Reifferscheid (Bonn: [unknown], 1839-78), vol. 2, p. 172, both as in Ralph Bailey Yewdale, *Bohemond*

The cult of St Nicholas also responded to the needs of later crusaders: in the year 1201 the troubadour Raimbaut de Vaqueiras composed a ‘Crusade Song’ in which he invoked St Nicholas’s protection for his master Marquis Boniface I of Montferrat (c.1150-1207), the leader of the Fourth Crusade:

> May Saint Nicholas of Bari guide our fleet … and we shall easily have routed and slain all the Turks, and will recover on the field of battle the true Cross which we have lost.[154]

The crusades brought visitors to the shrine of St Nicholas, and this contributed to its prosperity: in the year 1189 the Count Bertoldus and his sons Enricus and Ermannus set sail from Bari to the Holy Land during the Third Crusade in a boat named after St Nicholas: ‘cum buttia Sancti Nicolai barensis’. The count also donated forty-four olive trees to the church of S. Nicola at Bari.[155] In return, the shrine responded to the needs of the visitors. Abbot Elia, who was responsible for the construction of the church of S. Nicola, also erected a hospital dedicated to St Nicholas, to care for the sick and wounded crusaders and pilgrims.[156] This hospital also received generous donations, and consequently became prosperous.[157]

Just as Bari’s location on a major pilgrimage route contributed to the shrine’s success, so did the crusades. Because Bari was a popular place for departure to the Holy Land, and because only a short period of time elapsed between the translation and the arrival of the first crusading

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I, Prince of Antioch (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1970), p. 114. For Bohemond and the First Crusade, see also Marin (1997), pp. 152-54; Iorio (1997), pp. 227-29.

[154] ‘Nostr’ estol guit sains Nicholaus de Bari … que leu aurem los Turcs totz mortz e rotz e cobrarem en camp la vera crotz c’avem perdut’. The text of the ‘Crusade Song’, with the English translation quoted above, are given by Joseph Linskill, *The Poems of the Troubadour, Raimbaut de Vaqueiras* (The Hague: Mouton, 1964), pp. 216-34. For St Nicholas, see pp. 218-20.

[155] For the testament of Count Bertoldus, see Nitti di Vito, ed. (1902), pp. 262-63, no. 154. The word ‘buttia’ is most likely a corruption of the medieval Latin word ‘butea’, meaning ‘ship’; see Latham (1980), p. 60.

[156] See Melchiorre (1987), pp. 339-45.

[157] For example, the 1101 testament of Count Robert of Conversano claims that the Norman Duke Boemond made a donation to the hospital of S. Nicola di Bari. See Nitti di Vito, ed. (1902), p. 59, no. 34.

soldiers to Bari, the increasing and continuing popularity of the shrine of St Nicholas cannot be considered outside the context of the First, and subsequent, crusades. This is not to suggest that the success of the shrine was dependent upon the crusades, rather that the two are intricately connected. The success of the shrine did not rest purely upon the reputation of the saint, but partly on the specific location of his new shrine. To emphasise this point, it is interesting that Bari become known as *Portus S. Nicolai*;[158] as the reputation of the saint spread, he became associated with the function of the town as a port.

Perhaps because of the close relationship between the shrine of St Nicholas and the port of Bari, the cult of the saint developed a pan-Adriatic aspect. The smallest of the Tremiti islands, located north of the Gargano peninsular reaching out into the Adriatic, had been named after St Nicholas by the mid-eleventh century, before the translation of the saint's relics to Bari.[159] Following the translation, the cult can be witnessed in many towns along the eastern Adriatic coastline of Dalmatia. In 1148, Dubrovnik and Molfetta, a port very close to Bari, agreed a mutual exemption from taxes payable in each other's ports, an agreement that was repeated with other Puglian towns nearby, in particular Monopoli and Bisceglie. In 1201 a trade agreement was established directly between Dubrovnik and Bari.[160] The cult of St Nicholas was present at Dubrovnik: a church dedicated to St Nicholas had existed by the shore to the north of the city, in present-day Prijeko, from at least the twelfth century.[161] The Dubrovnik testament discussed

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[158] For example, a fragment of an undated Angevin chronicle states: 'complures per portum Sancti Nicholai Constantinopolim pervenerunt'. Paul Marchegay and André Salmon, eds, *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou* vol. 1 (Paris: Société de l'histoire de France, 1856), p. 382. See also Melchiorre (1987), p. 338.

[159] S. Nicola di Tremiti is the smallest of the 3 islands that make up the Tremiti archipelago. The island has several important monuments, including the monastery of Sta Maria di Tremiti. Documents pertaining to the church, built in 1045, refer to the island by the name of S. Nicola. See Armando Petrucci, ed., *Codice diplomatico del monastero benedettino di S. Maria di Tremiti* (Rome: Fonti per la Storia d'Italia, 1960), p. xxxix.

[160] See Francesco Babudri, 'Mercanti pugliesi medievale e novellistica levantina venuta in Puglia dal mare', in *EFM* Session A, Oct. 8th (Naples: Mostra d'Oltremare e del Lavoro Italiano nel Mondo, 3-10 Oct. 1957), p. 40. See also David Abulafia, 'Dalmatian Ragusa and the Norman Kingdom of Sicily', *SEER* 54, no. 3 (Jul. 1976), p. 414.

[161] For the church of St Nicholas at Prijeko, see Francis W. Carter, *Dubrovnik (Ragusa) – A Classic City-State* (London: Seminar Press, 1972), pp. 447, 456. The Apostolic Visitation to Ragusa (Dubrovnik) mentions 11 churches dedicated to St Nicholas in the town. One church contains a wooden sculpture of the

earlier in this chapter provides a further link between the city and Bari, made through the medium of the cult of St Nicholas.[162] The Apostolic Visitation to Dalmatia, dated 1579,[163] shows that many towns in the vicinity of Dubrovnik also had a St Nicholas church, for example the 'abbatia Sti Nicolai de Issa',[164] on the island of Lissa, and the 'Ecclesia Sti Nicholai' at Bar on the Montenegran coast.[165]

Beyond Dalmatia the cult of St Nicholas was present further inland in Serbia. The Nemanija dynasty (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries) had a profound devotion to St Nicholas, and in 1319 King Uroš III Dečanski donated an enormous silver altarpiece to the church of S. Nicola at Bari (Fig. 3.37).[166] The devotion to St Nicholas was probably taken from the Byzantine Empire, which had established Orthodox Christianity in the region. Uroš III may have embellished the shrine at Bari because the saint's orthodox shrine at Myra was at this point in ruins and under Turkic control. However, it is significant that the shrine at Bari had evidently penetrated the orthodox world.

The location of the shrine of St Nicholas in the portal town of Bari is significant not only because of the exposure this gave to the cult of St Nicholas, but because of the saint's role as the patron of mariners. The written legends of St Nicholas concur that he performed miracles at sea, in particular the rescuing of ships during violent storms.[167] This particular aspect of the saint's

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saint: '*figura in legno sculpta Sancti Nicolai*'. See ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 28, Ragusa (1573-74), ff. 2r-56v for an index of church dedications, and f. 733v for the wooden St Nicholas sculpture (Vatican folio numbers).

[162] See p. 157, fn. 142, above.

[163] ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 80, Dalmazia (1579). This Visitation includes the following towns (modern names in brackets): Pharensis (Hvar), Antibaren (Bar), Spalaten (Split), Tragurien (Trogir), Sibinicensis (Šibènik), Iadren (Zadar), Nonen (Nin), Pagi (Pag), Artensis (Rab), Ausseremis (Oser), Chersen (Cres), Veglen (Krk). There is a separate Visitation for Ragusa (Dubrovnik): ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 28, Ragusa (1573-74).

[164] ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 80, Dalmazia (1579), f. 11r.

[165] Ibid., f. 17r.

[166] The Serbian sovereign also paid for the restoration of the crypt and tomb of St Nicholas. For relations between Puglia and Serbia, see Mariani (2006), pp. 110-11; for the donation of Uroš III, see also Melchiorre (1987), p. 7; Cassano, et al, eds (1998), p. 338.

[167] Such a miracle is mentioned by Voragine, see Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 23-24. Many Greek sources mention sea miracles, including the *Vita per Michaëlem*; the *Vita Methodius ad Theodorum*; the *Vita Compilata*; the *Vita per Metaphrasten* and the *Encomium Neophyti*. See also Ševčenko (1983), p. 95.

legend, in addition to the arrival of his relics to Bari by boat, would have proved particularly compelling within the maritime context of his shrine's location at Bari. The act of the holy theft of the relics of St Nicholas was a source of tremendous pride for the people of Bari:[168] the acquisition of the body of a long-venerated saint from the East – an impressive feat in itself – gave the town an identity and a patron to worship in the face of daily adversity at sea. This point emphasises the importance of the physical remains of St Nicholas in Bari, which in turn draws attention to the nature of relic worship, and the efficacy of veneration being dependent upon proximity to the physical remains of the saints.[169]

The importance of St Nicholas to the maritime community of Puglia can be witnessed within many aspects of the arts, in particular poetry and song.[170] The strong oral tradition of the Puglian mariners, which helped perpetuate the cult of St Nicholas along the Adriatic coast, emphasised the miracles performed by the saint at sea, and his role as a patron of seafarers. One story dated between the mid-eleventh and mid-thirteenth centuries tells how a merchant from Molfetta returned from Alexandria with an Arab, a Greek and a Jew on board his ship.[171] When they encountered a terrible storm, the Arab prostrated himself to the East, 'in chìliba', the Greek invoked the Virgin, 'Vergine basilissa', and the Jew begged the help of Jehovah. All this pleading was in vain, until the owner of the ship invoked St Nicholas of Bari, 'si quaeris miracula', and the sea became calm and they arrived safely back in Molfetta.[172] This story is significant because it shows the complex relationship between cult and devotion: the reputation of the efficacy of St

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[168] The translation accounts of Niceforo and John the Deacon describe the pride of the people of Bari when the relics were brought to their town. See Corsi (1988): Niceforo, pp. 33-34; Giovanni Arcidiacono, pp. 63-65.

[169] Vauchez (1997), p. 432. For the role of relics in the cult of a saint, see Patrick J. Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1994).

[170] See the song quoted in the Introduction above. For the development of oral tradition amongst maritime communities, see Giovanni Battista Bronzini, 'Santi e Mercanti sui Mari di Puglia. Schede di ex voto marinari pugliesi, a cura di F. Mirizzi', *Lares* 55, no. 1 (1989), esp. p. 11.

[171] Babudri (1957), p. 39. Babudri discusses a collection of short stories from merchants arriving at Puglia from the Levant. He dates the stories to before the mid-13th century, at which time shifts in commercial activity in the Adriatic following the start of Angevin rule saw a decrease in the links between Puglia and the Eastern Empire.

[172] A summary of this story is given by Babudri (1957), p. 42. Babudri's source is Francesco Samarelli, *Ricerche storiche su Molfetta marinara attraverso i secoli* (Molfetta: Apicella, 1934).

Nicholas had spread along the coast to Molfetta; in return St Nicholas would come to the aid of those who sought him. The story also shows that St Nicholas was called upon not by the Greek traveller, but by the merchant from Molfetta. The superiority of Latin Christianity over the other dominant religions within the Mediterranean is therefore communicated through the symbol of St Nicholas. Here the saint is promoted as a symbol of western Christianity; the Greek traveller, and the Orthodox Church, no longer claim him.

The relationship between St Nicholas and Adriatic mariners is a strong characteristic of the cult of St Nicholas in Puglia. St Nicholas was the patron of mariners and therefore attracted the veneration of this community. Because the shrine of St Nicholas was located by an important port, mariners, as well as crusaders and pilgrims, could pray to the saint before departure. While at sea the oral tradition of songs and invocations to the saint spread the word of his efficacy along the coast, just as pilgrims stopping at Bari on their way to Rome or the Holy Land spread news of the cult across the Mediterranean. Were mariners attracted to the cult of St Nicholas because he was the patron of seafarers, or was this the dominant profile that the saint was given in response to the needs of the community? The dangers facing Puglian mariners have been mentioned above; the additional perils of the crusades greatly increased the need for saintly protection. St Nicholas provided a constant source of hope throughout the turbulent years of the crusades, and indeed the ever-changing rulership of Bari.

The location of the shrine of St Nicholas at one of the most important Puglian ports contributed considerably to the success of the saint's cult in Italy. The Norman rulers chose Bari as the seat of their power because of the town's long history of commercial and military successes; this continued throughout the Middle Ages when the port attracted increasing numbers of pilgrims heading for the Holy Land, as well as crusading soldiers. All these factors are intrinsically related and must be considered concurrently when examining the cult of St Nicholas in Puglia. Perhaps, had any of the above factors been different, an alternative cult may have developed. It is important to consider that the population of Bari may have had preconceived ideas about St Nicholas, who was considered a maritime saint in Puglia as early as the ninth century when he rescued the father of the patriarch of Constantinople. Perhaps this was even an influential factor behind the theft of the saint's body from Myra. Nevertheless, it is difficult to imagine that the shrine of St Nicholas would have had such a profound impact had his body been brought inland. At the same time, would the saint have attracted such a large cult following at Bari had he not been so effective during a storm? This line of questioning highlights the complexity of the ways in which the shrine at Bari became so successful so quickly, and why the cult in Puglia took on the particular characteristics that it did.

PART THREE: RIVAL CULTS

The success of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari meant that, naturally, other shrines suffered. When St Nicholas was brought to Bari his identity became intricately connected to the new urban setting of his shrine. The Barese ownership of the saint's body, however, sparked tension that became manifest in rivalry, both within Bari and with other towns in the region. Rivalry was also caused by disputes over the possession of the relics, and by existing shrines that became overshadowed. In addition, in the town of Trani, a rival cult was established in emulation of the shrine at Bari, to benefit from the popularity of St Nicholas and to gain prestige through association with this saint. This repercussion of the translation of St Nicholas is not emphasised in the modern literature on the saint, but is important because it demonstrates how the saint's shrine had a profound effect on sanctity within the region, beyond the patterns of pilgrimage. One shrine's success could provoke a powerful reaction from another, providing an opportunity to display political and civil competitiveness.

THE CATHEDRAL AT BARI

Niceforo's account of the translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Bari describes a dispute concerning where the relics should be interred after they had arrived at Bari. The town's aristocracy wished for the body to be placed in the crypt of the cathedral, 'in episcopio', but the sailors who had recovered the body desired the relics to be placed in the 'curte catepani', the Byzantine court next to the harbour.[173] Because Archbishop Ursone was absent from Bari when the relics arrived, they were entrusted to Abbot Elia of the monastery of St Benedict, who proceeded to construct a new church of St Nicholas on the site of the court of the *catepano*, in accordance with the wishes of the sailors. Despite having a suitable crypt, rebuilt only half a century before the translation, the cathedral of Bari was thus overlooked. That this loss was considered significant for the cathedral is suggested by events of the year 1091, discussed below, and by the architecture of the cathedral that was rebuilt in the thirteenth century.

The origins of the cathedral of Bari are uncertain.[174] According to legend, a crypt existed as part of an episcopal church from before the late-ninth century, when an icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* taken from Constantinople was placed there.[175] An episcopal church dedicated to the Virgin certainly existed at the start of the eleventh century.[176] By 1028 Archbishop Bisanzio (1025-35) had begun the construction of a new cathedral, based on the plan of a Greek cross.[177] Building work was continued by Bisanzio's successors Nicola (1035-61), Andrea (1061-78), and Ursone (1078-89), and completed around the year 1086.[178] The new cathedral was consecrated by

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[173] The dispute between the residents of Bari concerning the relics is discussed in detail by Pertusi (1978), pp. 38-48. See also Putignani (1771), p. 562; Bacci (2009), pp. 113-14.

[174] For the history of the cathedral of Bari, see Raffeale Iorio, 'La cattedrale di Bari: documenti e continuità', *ASP* 47 (Bari: Società di Storia Patria per la Puglia, 1994), pp. 135-49; Nicola Milano, *Le chiese della diocese di Bari. Note storiche e artistiche* (Bari: Levante, 1982), pp. 55-102; Pina Belli d'Elia, ed. (1975), pp. 99-112.

[175] For the legend, see *Istoria della Traslazione della miracolosa immagine di Santa Maria di Costantinopoli nella città di Bari. Scritta nell'idioma latino nell'anno 898 dal sacerdote Gregorio all'Arciv. Giovanni, e tradotta in italiano nell'anno 1822 da un Barese divoto di Maria Santissima* (Naples: [unknown], 1824, 2nd edition), as in Cioffari (1992), p. 16, fn. 13.

[176] Nitti di Vito, ed. (1897), p. 25, no. 15; Belli d'Elia (1975), p. 99.

[177] For plans of Bisanzio's Greek-cross cathedral, and subsequent rebuildings, see Cesare Schino, *The Basilica Cathedral of Bari = La basilique cathédrale de Bari = Die Basilika Kathedrale von Bari* (Bari: Arti Grafiche Favia, 1982), p. 20.

[178] Belli d'Elia (1975), p. 99.

Pope Urban II in 1098, when the pope was present in the town for the Council of Bari. In the following century, in 1156, the crypt below the transept was enlarged underneath the nave.[179]

In the same year the cathedral, along with most of the town, was destroyed by King William I of Sicily (1154-66) because the town was a stronghold of anti-Norman resistance in the region.[180] The church of S. Nicola remained undamaged because it was a symbol of Norman power. The cathedral was abandoned until the king's death, but by the year 1178 building had begun on a new, much larger cathedral under the direction of Archbishop Rainaldo (1171-88), this time with the plan of a Latin cross with a central nave and side aisles, and a transept above the existing crypt.[181] This cathedral was built from the surviving wall foundations of the eleventh-century structure, and remains of that building, or possibly the earlier original cathedral, can be seen in the fragments of a mosaic pavement discovered in the crypt below the nave.[182] A cupola was built above the crossing, and either side of the tri-apsidal east end two very tall campaniles were erected.[183] Work was completed in the thirteenth century; in 1233 the high altar was consecrated in the presence of Emperor Frederick II by the Archbishop of Palermo, Bernardo Costa, who had been Archbishop of Bari between 1207 and 1214. Following repair works to damage caused by an earthquake in 1267, the church was reconsecrated in 1292 and dedicated to the Virgin of the Assumption.[184]

The cathedral that stands today is essentially the structure of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century rebuilding. In the fourteenth century under Archbishop Landolfo (1310-32), the entire roof was rebuilt after the walls of the nave were raised and a rose window was added to the west

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[179] According to an inscription located on the wall to the right of the altar of the crypt. See Belli d'Elia (1975), p. 105, fn. 7.

[180] See Hugo Falcando, in Muratori, ed. (1729), vol. 7, col. 269, as in Belli d'Elia (1975), p. 106, fn. 8. See also Iorio (1994), pp. 146-47.

[181] For the rebuilding of the cathedral in the 12th century, see Iorio (1994), pp. 135-49. For the plan of the 12th-century cathedral, and how it corresponded to the previous monument, see Belli d'Elia (1975), p. 99.

[182] For the mosaic pavement fragment, see Belli d'Elia (1975), pp. 100-03.

[183] According to the 1178 bull of Pope Alexander III (1159-81), written to confirm approval of the new construction of the cathedral, which required the buying of surrounding buildings to allow for a bigger construction. Nitti di Vito, ed. (1897), pp. 102-03, no. 53.

[184] Schino (1982), p. 5.

façade.[185] In the seventeenth century the right-hand bell tower collapsed and was not rebuilt. Twentieth-century restorations have removed the baroque stucco work from the interior walls and ceiling, as well as sculpture from the external facades; the left-hand bell tower, which was only partly rebuilt following the 1267 earthquake, was also rebuilt to its original height.[186] The circular structure known as the Trulla, built in the twelfth or thirteenth century next to the left-hand exterior wall of the nave, was converted in the seventeenth century to a sacristy, but was probably originally used as a baptistery.[187]

On 10 December 1091, while demolishing the altar built by his predecessor Bisanzio to make room for three more in its place, Archbishop Elia 'discovered' the relics of St Sabinus in the crypt of the newly rebuilt eleventh-century cathedral.[188] The relics of the saint had been brought to Bari from Canosa sometime between 872 and 876, and following Elia's rediscovery were translated to the crypt of the new cathedral.[189] There may have been several motives behind this event. In the year 1025, Pope John XIX transferred the episcopal seat held for many centuries by Canosa to Bari.[190] Drawing attention to Barese ownership of the relics of St Sabinus, who had been Bishop of Canosa in the sixth century and was the town's celebrated patron saint, could have been a means of asserting Bari's ecclesiastic authority over Canosa.[191] However, the timing of the translation, nearly seventy years after the bull of John XIX but only four years after the relics of St Nicholas were brought to Bari, suggests that the rediscovery may have been made in response to the arrival of this new saint. St Sabinus was the patron saint of Bari before St Nicholas; promotion of the former patron saint's cult may have been intended to assert the fact that Bari already had a bishop saint as the town's representative, and to deflect attention away

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[185] Ibid., p. 5.

[186] For details of the restorations, which took place in the first half of the 20th century, including before-and-after photographs, see Schino (1982), pp. 8-37.

[187] Belli d'Elia (1975), p. 105.

[188] According to John the Deacon, 'Historia inventionis S. Sabini episcopi canusini', *AASS* 2, Feb., ed. Joannis Bolland, et al (Antwerp: Michaelem Cnobarum, 1685), pp. 330-31. See also Iorio (1994), p. 144.

[189] Milano (1982), p. 57; Belli d'Elia (1975), p. 99.

[190] See p. 144, fn. 67, above.

[191] For details of the cathedral of Canosa, and St Sabinus, see Wharton Epstein (1983), pp. 79-90.

from the escalating cult of St Nicholas. Also, the cathedral crypt had remained empty when the relics of St Nicholas were placed instead in the crypt of the new church of S. Nicola in 1089; St Sabinus filled the vacant position, enabling the cathedral to compete in terms of prestige.

In the year 1156 the crypt of the cathedral was enlarged, perhaps in anticipation of attracting to the tomb of St Sabinus the large volume of visitors passing through Bari. When the cathedral was destroyed by William I later in the same year, the opportunity was seized to construct a much larger and grander cathedral in its place. This new building shared many characteristics with the church of S. Nicola. For example the west façade, divided into three large, vertical surfaces, recalls the façade of S. Nicola (Figs 3.38, 3.39). The external blind arches and window sculpture also imitate the church of S. Nicola, and both buildings display the feature of pillars resting upon the backs of animals (Figs 3.40-3.43). Internally, both buildings have a central nave and two aisles terminating in three large, curving apses at the east end (Figs 3.44, 3.45).[192] In the thirteenth century a bishop's chair and ciborium, similar to those at S. Nicola, were built for the cathedral by Alfano da Termoli (Figs 3.30, 3.46-3.48).[193] The new cathedral had the additional feature of two tall campaniles, ensuring the cathedral was highly visible from within the town, including from outside the church of S. Nicola, and also out at sea.[194]

The building of a larger cathedral was most likely necessitated by the increasing numbers of visitors to Bari, and the architectural and sculptural similarities may simply reflect trends established by the church of S. Nicola, seen elsewhere in Puglia.[195] However, the close dates of the translations of St Nicholas and St Sabinus suggest a degree of competition, which appears to be confirmed visually by the shared architectural features of the new cathedral and the church of

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[192] For details, see Belli d'Elia (1975), p. 103.

[193] This information is provided on site by the *Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici per i Beni Paesaggistici per la Provincia di Bari e Foggia.*

[194] The present-day remaining campanile, restored to its original height in the 1950s renovation, is visible from the Piazza S. Nicola, and from the Castello Svevo by the harbour. It is probable that these sightlines were visible during the Middle Ages, as the 2 churches and castle would have been the largest buildings in the city.

[195] The influence of the church of S. Nicola upon the architecture and sculpture of later churches in Puglia will be discussed below.

S. Nicola. This rivalry illustrates the influence of the relics of St Nicholas within the community to which they were brought, and how they were able to create friction, as well as prosperity.

ADVENTUS SANCTI NICOLAI IN BENEVENTUM

The successful shrine at Bari also provoked rivalry from other towns in southern Italy. A particularly interesting case is that of Benevento, just north-east of Naples, which attacked the town of Bari and the new urban identity of St Nicholas through the use of 'touristic propaganda'.[196]

Around the year 1096 a hagiographical text was produced at Benevento entitled *Adventus sancti Nycolai in Beneventum*.[197] This document describes many miracles which supposedly occurred at the church of S. Niccolò at Benevento. The miracles largely involve pilgrims. For example, on the day of Pentecost 1089, a pilgrim, shaky and of weak health, arrived at Benevento from Bari, where he had visited the tomb of St Nicholas to be healed. At Bari the pilgrim had squandered his money and was forced to sell his clothing in order to survive. At the height of his despair he met an old man who advised him to go instead to the church of St Nicholas at Benevento, where he would be cured. Following much hardship the pilgrim finally arrived at Benevento, where he was indeed cured.[198]

The *Adventus* is widely acknowledged as an example of tourist propaganda, produced in the Benevento court milieu in response to the establishment of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari.[199] The document aimed to both discredit the shrine at Bari and to promote the church of the same saint at Benevento, which had existed since before the translation, with the intention of

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[196] The expression 'propaganda turistica' is used by Guiseppe Praga, 'La traslazione di S. Niccolò e i primordi delle guerre normanne in adriatico: L'adventus Sancti Nicolai in Beneventum', *ASD* 15, fasc. 85 (Apr. 1933), p. 21. See also Otranto (2004), pp. 117-19.

[197] For the text, see Gaetano Cangiano, ed., *L'Adventus sancti Nycolai in Beneventum. Leggenda agiografica della fine del secolo XI* (Benevento: Chiostro di Santa Sofia, 1925). See also Otranto (2004), p. 119. Praga describes another text of the *Adventus*, now at the Biblioteca Capitolare di Benevento, which dates to the beginning of the second half of the 12th century and also contains the Barese legend of Niceforo. See Praga (1933), pp. 11-26. Otranto dates the text to 1090; see Otranto, ed. (1987), p. 44.

[198] Cangiano (1925), pp. 21-22; Otranto (2004), p. 119. See also Praga (1937), p. 14.

[199] See Otranto (2004), pp. 120-21.

reclaiming lost pilgrims who were attracted to the new St Nicholas church at Bari. The miracle described above claims that the saint's power at Benevento was greater than at Bari, and it would therefore be advantageous for a pilgrim to travel instead to Benevento. The *Adventus* is also a critique of the Barese urban identity of St Nicholas, as it attacks the social aspect of travelling to Bari, which apparently had appalling conditions for pilgrims. As well as a place of vice to squander money, Bari was dirty, without water, bread or wine: it was 'disumana'.[200] The bad conditions at Bari were emphasised so that Benevento, which was described as a charitable place, humane with abundant wine, meat and fish, rich with the produce of the land and plenty of flowing water, would appear a haven in contrast.[201]

The *Adventus* is a propagandist text and is therefore problematic for obtaining historical details. The conditions described at Bari in particular were presumably exaggerated for the purposes of the text. Nevertheless, the details described in the *Adventus* are confirmed by other sources, which also attest to the poor conditions awaiting pilgrims in Bari. The *vita* of St John of Matera, a Benedictine Abbot and founder of the Pulsanense order at Pulsano near Monte S. Angelo, describes how he had visited Bari sometime before 1130 and found the city to be full of vice, in particular lust and greed.[202] A twelfth-century legend from Bari tells of a wealthy pilgrim from France who travelled there to find a cure for his paralysed legs, but was forced to build his own hospital in the city because there were inadequate resources for his needs.[203] A hospital had

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[200] Cangiano (1925), p. 23.

[201] Ibid., p. 23; Otranto (2004), p. 119.

[202] For the *vita* of St John of Matera, see *AASS* 6, Jun., ed. van Papenbrock (Venice: [unknown]**,** 1743), pp. 41-58, cap. II, no. 10, p. 44, as in Cioffari (1984), pp. 126-27, fn. 5-6. See also Giulio Petroni, *Della Storia di Bari dagli antichi tempi sino all'anno 1856* (Naples: Fibreno, 1857-58), vol. 1, pp. 264-65.

[203] The 12th-century legend, described by Beatillo, tells of a wealthy gentleman from Nancy, France, who was paralysed and walked on his hands and knees for 11 years. After hearing about the translation of St Nicholas to Bari he decided to visit the shrine. Upon arrival he was not cured by St Nicholas, so he waited in a hospital that he himself paid for just outside the city, because no other facilities were available. After waiting with no luck, he decided to travel to Venice to ask St Mark for the relief that St Nicholas would not grant him. However, when passing Monte S. Angelo, he had a dream in which St Nicholas appeared, telling him to return to Bari otherwise he would be attacked and torn to pieces by dogs. The following morning he continued his journey to Venice, but was attacked and plundered by bandits; he heeded the warning and returned to his hospital at Bari. Here St Nicholas appeared to him again and encouraged him to stand and walk on his feet; on waking he did just that, and found that his legs were strong once again,

been built in Bari by Abbot Elia of the church of S. Nicola, in response to the growing numbers of pilgrims in the town.[204] However, according to the French pilgrim, this hospital was not sufficient. Benevento, on the other hand, had beautiful countryside, charitable residents, and plenty of hospitals.[205]

The propaganda produced at Benevento is an example of fierce competition for attracting pilgrims, initiated by the explosion of the cult of St Nicholas at Bari and the influx of pilgrims to his tomb. As discussed above, the relics of St Nicholas at Bari started drawing visitors to the town immediately following their translation. To promote a devotional site that would entice veneration (and business) from travellers to and from Bari seems to be an obvious manoeuvre. It is interesting, however, that this move occurred in a town that already attracted many pilgrims because of its apostolic shrine of St Bartholomew. Benevento was situated along a major pilgrimage route from Rome to Puglia; in the twelfth century, the Icelandic pilgrim Abbot Nikulás stopped at Benevento on his way to Monte S. Angelo.[206] The popularity of the shrine of St Bartholomew suggests that the motivations behind the *Adventus* propaganda were more complex than a simple desire to profit from the increasing numbers of visitors to Bari. Giorgio Otranto has suggested that the aggressive attitude of Benevento towards Bari was politically stimulated.[207] Benevento had been the seat of a powerful Lombard duchy, and later a Byzantine principality. Consequently, the town had been considered as the principal Byzantine stronghold in southern Italy, but Bari was chosen instead because it was situated by the sea and could be more easily protected by the empire's fleet. Additionally, the empire's commercial interests could be

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and he immediately went to the saint's tomb to give thanks. See Cioffari (1984), p. 80. Cioffari's source is Beatillo (1620), p. 718.

[204] Evidently conditions in Bari were so bad that a hospital was built. The document recording the donation of Count Robert of Conversano, mentioned above (p. 162, fn. 157), indicates that by May 1101 a hospital was set up and in use, built by Abbot Elia. The document is a record of a donation of 3 quarters of an olive plantation, given by Roberto to the Norman ruler Boemond who was at the time '*in ospitalium Sancti Nicolai de civitate Bari*'. Nitti di Vito, ed. (1902), p. 59, no. 34. See also Cioffari (1984), p. 80; Otranto (2004), pp. 123-24.

[205] Praga (1933), p. 21.

[206] Hill (1983), p. 178.

[207] Otranto (2004), p. 122.

better controlled from a town on the Adriatic coast.[208] When southern Italy was conquered by the Normans, Bari was again chosen as the main seat of power, and Benevento became a papal possession.[209]

Benevento had been overshadowed by Bari on several occasions in the past; the *Adventus* perhaps indicates a desire on behalf of the court of Benevento that this should not occur again after the shrine of St Nicholas was established at Bari. The repercussions of the translation of St Nicholas to Bari were therefore varied: the rivalry of Benevento shows that the shrine was targeted for political purposes. The relics of St Nicholas evidently had great influence within the region, if casting doubt over their efficacy was considered an effective political tool. The *Adventus* document is significant because it connected the cult of St Nicholas to the ongoing power struggles within the wider region of southern Italy.

ST NICHOLAS THE PILGRIM AT TRANI

In May 1094 a young Greek pilgrim travelling through Puglia to Rome arrived in the town of Trani, a port thirty kilometres to the north of Bari.[210] Exhausted and weak, the pilgrim died ten days later on 2 June, aged eighteen, and his body was carried to the town's cathedral where it began to perform miracles.[211] In 1097 work began on the construction of a new cathedral in

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[208] Cioffari (1984), p. 119.

[209] See Kazhdan, et al, eds (1991), vol. 1, pp. 281-82.

[210] For the history of Trani, in particular the town's Roman origins and the evidence to be gleaned from inscriptions and archival documents, see Arcangelo Prologo, *I primi tempi della città di Trani* (Bologna: Arnaldo Forni, 1981, first published Giovinazzo: Arnaldo Forni, 1883). See also Arcangelo Prologo, *Le carte che si conservano nello archivio del Capitolo Metropolitano della Città di Trani (dal IX secolo fino all'anno 1266)* (Barletta: Vecchi e Soci, 1877), for a history of Trani extracted from published documents from the Archivio del Capitolo Metropolitano in Trani.

[211] There are 2 *vitae* of St Nicholas the Pilgrim, which are contemporary to the saint's life. Firstly, an anonymous work is based on the testimony of Bartolomeo, a travelling companion of the saint: see *BHL* (Brussels: Society of Bollandists, 1898-99), vol. 2, p. 900, no. 6223. Secondly, the testament of Adelfrio was dictated to Bishop Bisanzio (1063-1100): see Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 7, cols 895-900. These 2 accounts vary regarding events of the youth's life in Greece, but agree that upon his arrival in Puglia, he was mistreated and ignored in Otranto, but was very popular in Taranto and Trani. Here he acquired a following of local children to whom he donated fruit, and spent his days wandering through the streets singing 'Kyrie Eleison'. After he died, numerous miracles occurred in the vicinity of his tomb, prompting Bishop Bisanzio to request his canonisation. A third *vita*, dated from the mid-12th century, was written by

honour of the pilgrim,[212] and the following year, just four years after Nicholas's death, Pope Urban II announced his canonisation.[213] By the mid-twelfth century the cathedral of S. Nicola Pellegrino was complete, and in 1143 his relics were translated into the crypt.[214]

Émile Bertaux has proposed that the hasty establishment of the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim, initiated so soon after his death, was instigated by the enterprising Archbishop Bisanzio of Trani (1063-1100), who realised an opportunity to capitalise on the success of the nearby shrine of St Nicholas at Bari.[215] This section will develop Bertaux's theory by exploring the relationships between the towns of Trani and Bari and their respective St Nicholas shrines. St Nicholas the Pilgrim was personally devoted to St Nicholas, as before departing his homeland he visited a shrine dedicated to his namesaint.[216] St Nicholas the Pilgrim arrived at the port of Otranto from where he followed the pilgrimage route to Rome, which took him to Trani; it is likely that he passed through Bari on the way. This study will explore whether, just as St Nicholas the Pilgrim was devoted to St Nicholas of Bari, Archbishop Bisanzio's promotion of the cult at Trani took the form of emulation, presenting a contrast to the aggressive competitiveness seen at Bari's rival shrine of Benevento.

Amando, Deacon of Trani, as part of his *Historia Translationis*. Amando claims that Nicholas was a monk from the monastery of H. Loukas in Focide. See *BHL* (1898-99), vol. 2, p. 900. no. 6224; Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 7, cols 900-06. See also Cioffari, et al (1991), pp. 200-01.

[212] This date is disputed. A date of 1094 for the start of the construction of the new basilica is suggested by an inscription on the *pronaos* of the main entrance door of the church, which states: 'Civitatis patronus anno domini MXCIV'. See Francesco Sarlo, *Il duomo di Trani: monumento nazionale storicamente ed artisticamente descritto* (Trani: Vecchi, 1897), p. 42. See also Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, p. 363, no. 2. A slightly later date of 1097 is, however, generally accepted. See Marcello Benedettelli, 'La cattedrale: i restauri', in *Castelli e cattedrali di Puglia: a cent'anni dall'esposizione nazionale di Torino*, eds Clara Gelao and Gian Marco Jacobitti (Bari: Consorzio Idria, 1999), p. 603.

[213] The bull of Urban II was recorded in the *Historia Translationis* of Amando, Deacon of Trani. See Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 7, cols 900-06; Cioffari, et al (1991), p. 201.

[214] The body of St Nicholas the Pilgrim was translated into the crypt in 1143. The precise date of the completion of the cathedral is not known. Archival documents mention construction work on the cathedral in 1131, 1138 and 1163. It is likely that construction was fully complete before 1174, the date given to the bronze doors installed in the west entrance. See Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, p. 364, for a discussion on these dates. The new church was built on the site of an existing church dedicated to the Virgin, which will be discussed below.

[215] Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, p. 362. See also Paul Holberton, *South Italy, A Traveller's Guide* (London: J. Murray, 1992), p. 65.

[216] According to the anonymous *vita* based on the testimony of Bartolomeo. *BHL* (1898-99), vol. 2, p. 900, no. 6223, as in Cioffari, et al (1991), p. 200.

Evidence to support the theory that the establishment of the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim was a response to the shrine of the other St Nicholas at Bari is strong. Nicholas the Pilgrim came to Trani less than a decade after the translation of St Nicholas's relics to Bari. According to the *vita* of Amando, Deacon of Trani, the saint's unusually rapid canonisation was the result of the persistence of Archbishop Bisanzio, who took advantage of Pope Urban II's presence in Puglia for the 1098 Council of Bari, convincing the pope of the sanctity of the pilgrim and achieving his aim of extracting from the pope a bull of canonisation.[217] The name of Bisanzio's chosen champion cannot be ignored, and created an immediate, strong link between the saint at Trani and St Nicholas at Bari. The association through name that visitors to Trani would have made perhaps transferred prestige to the cult of the new St Nicholas. Such a strong connection would have provided a solid foundation for the development and growth of the new cult; Bisanzio was apparently certain that the new shrine would succeed because he began work on the cathedral of S. Nicola Pellegrino before the pilgrim was canonised.

The architecture and sculpture of the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, which mirror many aspects of the church of S. Nicola at Bari, created further connections between the two shrines. The church of S. Nicola Pellegrino which stands today displays a complex accumulation of different building phases (Fig. 3.49).[218] The church was built on top of the existing cathedral of Trani, dedicated to Sta Maria della Scala.[219] When a new, grander shrine was needed for the body of St Nicholas the Pilgrim, the apse of the church of Sta Maria was destroyed and in its place a new crypt was built, supporting the transept of the new cathedral built on top (Figs 3.50, 3.51).[220]

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[217] According to the bull, Archbishop Bisanzio presented documented facts of the miraculous deeds of Nicholas the Pilgrim to the pope during the 1098 Council of Bari. The evidence was so overwhelming that Urban II agreed to the canonisation of Nicholas the Pilgrim. See p. 176, fn. 213, above.

[218] For the building stages of the cathedral, see Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, pp. 362-74. The original church of S. Nicola Pellegrino has been repeatedly restored and altered over the centuries, but at the beginning of the 19th century work was carried out to restore the cathedral to its original 11th- and 12th-century architectural form, and to remove its baroque decoration. See Benedettelli (1999), p. 604.

[219] This church is dated to the 7th century; see Benedettelli (1999), p. 603.

[220] This has been determined by the 1971 excavation of the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, carried out by the *Soprintendenza ai Monumenti di Bari*. See *Puglia Paleocristiana* (Bari: Adriatica, 1970-91, vol. 2 imprinted at Galatina: Mario Congedo, 1974), vol. 2, pp. 189-92.

The church of Sta Maria still remains, acting as a lower church to the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino (Fig. 3.52). The double-layered structure is articulated on the west façade, where one can access the lower church at street level or ascend a ramp to enter the upper church of S. Nicola Pellegrino (Fig. 3.53). The seventh-century crypt of St Leucius, located beneath the sanctuary of the church of Sta Maria (now the crypt), still remains, as do the relics of this bishop saint whose remains were brought to Trani around the year 670 (Fig. 3.54). The body of St Nicholas the Pilgrim was originally placed in the east end of the church of Sta Maria, giving this church the function of a crypt for the new church of S. Nicola Pellegrino. In 1143 the body was translated into the new crypt, built from the east end of the church of Sta Maria, where it remains today (Fig. 3.55).[221]

The new church of S. Nicola Pellegrino took nearly a century to build. The resulting structure at the end of the twelfth century, which after modern restorations is the church that can be seen today, displays many similarities to the church of S. Nicola at Bari. Firstly, a comparison of the architectural plans of the churches indicates that the church at Trani was most likely influenced by the Barese shrine (Figs 3.56, 3.57).[222] Both churches have an east end terminating in three apses; at Bari these are concealed, but at Trani they are articulated externally. The nave of S. Nicola Pellegrino, erected around the mid-twelfth century, is a reproduction of that of S. Nicola at Bari as both naves terminate in three arches across the east end (Figs 3.58, 3.59).[223] Both churches also have a campanile to the south-west.[224] The faithfulness of the plan to that of S. Nicola at Bari is revealing about the intended purpose of the new building at Trani. The shrine of S. Nicola at Bari was built with the anticipation of accommodating large crowds: it has wide

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[221] The new crypt is taller than the nave of the church of Sta Maria, and the vaults rest on 28 marble columns brought from Pharos. The delay in translating the body to the new crypt was due to the interruption in the building work started by Archbishop Bisanzio caused by the revolt of the Puglian towns against King Roger II of Sicily. See Benedettelli (1999), pp. 603-04.

[222] As suggested by Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, p. 364; Stefania Mola, *La cattedrale de Trani* (Bari: Adda, 1996), p. 25. See also Holberton (1992), for more details of the architectural and sculptural imitations.

[223] Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, pp. 360-64. See also Mola (1996), p. 25.

[224] The campanile at Trani was added in the 13th century during the Hohenstaufen occupation of Puglia. See Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 2, p. 635.

aisles, a spacious sanctuary, and easy access to its large crypt. Because these features are repeated at Trani it is likely that the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino was built with the same expectation. Here, the lower church of Sta Maria, which temporarily acted as the crypt of St Nicholas the Pilgrim while the new cathedral and crypt were being built, can be accessed via wide staircases either side of the sanctuary area, just as at Bari.

The sculpted architectural features of S. Nicola Pellegrino perhaps best demonstrate a reliance upon the Barese shrine. The most striking feature is the repetition of sculpted animals on the external facades of both churches. At Bari, the central western portal is surmounted by an intricately-carved arch and flanked by two narrow columns. These columns rest upon the backs of two large beasts, possibly oxen (Fig. 3.60).[225] On the west façade of S. Nicola Pellegrino, the central window has a similar arrangement of a sculpted arch and narrow columns, which here rest upon two elephants (Fig. 3.61). The number of animals on the west façade of the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino far outnumber those at Bari, as the window at Trani also has two lions on top of the columns that rest upon the elephants, as well as a griffin at the top of the arch. Additionally, the rose window above is surrounded by six animals including the griffin, which is situated between the two windows and links them into one decorative scheme. Similarly, the window on the central apse at Trani displays five animals which are particularly emphasised because of their height above ground (Fig. 3.62). At Bari the apsidal window has two small elephants, performing the same task as those on the west façade at Trani (Fig. 3.43). Other smaller, more discreet sculptural examples include a relief fragment of a winged horse at Trani, reused on a tomb in the eighteenth century. This relief echoes sculpted animals from Bari, in particular a winged lion from a semi-capital in the crypt (Figs 3.63, 3.64).[226] The churches also have similar internal sculpted capitals which display composite arrangements of the Corinthian and Ionic orders (Figs 3.65, 3.66).

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[225] For details of the portal sculpture at S. Nicola, see Cioffari (1997), pp. 13-26.

[226] See Belli d'Elia (1975), pp. 70, 109-10.

The architectural plans of the two churches show that the transepts do not extend laterally beyond the nave. In both cases, external blind arches articulate the progression from the nave to the sanctuary, and create the impression of a protruding transept (Figs 3.67, 3.68). At Trani, the arches are taller, narrower and much shallower, but feature the same simple, thin rectangular capital. On both churches the blind arches continue onto the north and south façades of the transept, at which point two smaller arches spring from the same capitals and rest on a third, central one, beneath the larger arch. The bays here are much shallower, indicating a change in the internal space from nave to transept. This feature in particular is imitated at Trani. At Bari the arches are also present on the east façade, perhaps to bring interest to the immense, flat wall of stone which conceals the apses. The church at Bari continues this triple-arch feature on the west façade, but at Trani the eight blind arches on the west façade are distinctively incoherent. The arches here, which are heavily sculpted and rest upon protruding capitals, are the remains of a portico which originally overshadowed the ramp entrance to the upper church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, destroyed in the year 1700 (Fig. 3.69).[227]

In the wider Puglian context, the architectural and sculptural similarities between the churches of S. Nicola at Bari and S. Nicola Pellegrino at Trani are not exceptional, as the Barese church was highly influential and provided a model for many churches in the region. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries the prosperous towns on the Puglian coast aspired, for the most part, to own a church imitating the prestigious monument of S. Nicola at Bari; the cathedral of Trani, therefore, was following a regional trend.[228] It is even possible that the cathedral of Trani drew inspiration not only from the church of S. Nicola at Bari, but from these numerous other

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[227] For the lost portico, see Salvatore Carlo Capozzi, *Guida di Trani* (Trani: Vecchi, 1915), p. 17.

[228] Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, p. 358. The influence of the architecture of the church of S. Nicola upon other churches in Puglia has been discussed at length, and will only be mentioned briefly here. The churches in Puglia chose not to imitate the Roman style of northern Italy but instead the Norman style of St Nicholas, which in turn was elevated in imitation of the churches of Caen (northern France); see Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, pp. 336-39, for similarities between S. Nicola at Bari, Saint-Etienne and Saint-Nicolas at Caen. In Puglia, the influence of the church of S. Nicola can be seen in the cathedrals of Barletta, Bisceglie, Molfetta, Giovinazzo and Bitonto; see Holberton (1992), pp. 70-79 for a summary of details, and Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, p. 345.

churches. The nearby cathedral of Barletta, for example, was begun at the start of the twelfth century while the cathedral of Trani was still under construction, and displays close sculptural imitations of the church of S. Nicola at Bari (Fig. 3.70). Whether the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino represents a conscious imitation of the church of S. Nicola at Bari in uncertain, and the similarities between the churches do not confirm that the shrine at Trani was established as a rival to the shrine at Bari. If this was the case, the same could be argued for all the churches in the region that display the same characteristics. However, the repeated architectural features as Trani do increase in significance when they are considered alongside further connections that can be made between the two shrines, and indeed between the two saints themselves.

An important aspect common to both churches is their location by the sea. The church of S. Nicola Pellegrino is situated right by the shore, at a point where the seaward edge of the town juts into the Adriatic (Fig. 3.51). Many towns along the coast of Puglia, including Barletta, Bisceglie and Monopoli, have churches by the sea; S. Nicola Pellegrino, however, is currently situated merely metres from the edge of the water. The church dominates its surroundings. Like the church of S. Nicola at Bari, it could be seen easily by those approaching from the sea, acting as a guiding beacon for the port. As discussed earlier in this chapter, this was an appropriate function for the church of S. Nicola at Bari because of the saint's role as the protector of seafarers. The combination of St Nicholas's legends at sea and the location of his final resting place was pivotal for creating a specific identity for the saint at Bari. It can be argued that a similar set of circumstances applied to the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim, and that as a result this saint also became a protector of mariners.

The Deacon Amando, author of the mid-twelfth-century *Historia Translationis* containing events from the life of St Nicholas the Pilgrim, also recorded a miracle concerning this saint that he himself experienced. Travelling to Puglia from his native Syria, Amando and his crew became caught in a ferocious storm at sea. Amando invoked St Nicholas the Pilgrim, the patron of the town to where he was heading, and he and his companions landed safely at

Otranto.[229] Sea miracles performed within a community dependent upon favourable conditions are unremarkable in themselves, and are to be expected as saints were obliged to meet the demands of the faithful. The sea miracle performed by St Nicholas the Pilgrim is significant because it provides a further connection between this saint and the established saint of the sea, St Nicholas of Bari.

St Nicholas the Pilgrim's sea miracle features prominently on a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century *vita* panel preserved in the Museo Diocesano at Trani (Figs 3.71, 3.72).[230] I have identified only eight surviving works of art relating to the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim, which will be discussed below. The panel is significant because it is the only surviving example of a cycle of the saint's life. This *vita* panel displays the standing saint flanked on both sides by scenes from his life and miracles. In the central panel St Nicholas is represented in the garb of a pilgrim. He wears a simple, knee-length brown robe, and his face is beardless showing his youth. Across his body is a pilgrim's purse, and the saint is barefooted to indicate his poverty. In his right hand he holds a long, delicate crucifix, while his left hand is raised to the viewer. At the saint's feet a crowd of followers raise their hands and kneel before him. The scenes to the left read from top to bottom, and show: *St Nicholas Hears the Gospel*; *St Nicholas Leaves the Monastery*; *St Nicholas Sails to Taranto*; *St Nicholas Preaches at Taranto*; *St Nicholas gives Fruit to Children*; *St Nicholas is Called Before the Archbishop*; *St Nicholas Blesses Children*; *St Nicholas on his Sickbed Surrounded by Followers*; *The Death of St Nicholas*; *The Body of St Nicholas is Carried to the Church*, and *St Nicholas Cures a Follower from his Deathbed*. On the right-hand side, also reading from top to bottom, are represented St Nicholas the Pilgrim's posthumous miracles: *The Funeral of St Nicholas*; *A Miraculous Healing at His Tomb*; *Archbishop Bisanzio Informs the Pope of St Nicholas's Miraculous Deeds*; *St Nicholas Liberates Prisoners*; *St Nicholas Saves a*

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[229] Amando, Deacon of Trani, *Historia Translationis*, in *BHL* (1898-99), vol. 2, p. 900, no. 6224; Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 7, cols 900-06; see also Cioffari, et al (1991), p. 201.

[230] The date of the panel is unclear. Kaftal attributes it to the 13th or 14th century, see Kaftal (1965), p. 816; Mariani and Bertaux to the 14th century, see Maria Stella Calò Mariani, *L'arte del Duecento in Puglia* (Turin: Istituto bancaria San Paolo di Torino, 1984), p. 146; Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, p. 152.

Ship in a Storm; *Two Columns of Smoke Appear Above the Church During the Translation of the Relics of St Nicholas*; *The Exorcism of a Slave on a Boat who is Healed upon Visiting the Shrine*, and *St Nicholas Cures a Blind Man from Corneto*.[231]

This panel is particularly significant because, as well as containing the only surviving cycle of the life and miracles of St Nicholas the Pilgrim, it may also be one of only three remaining Byzantine panel paintings preserved in Puglia that are dated to before the fourteenth century.[232] The St Nicholas the Pilgrim panel is thought to have been painted by Greek artists for the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, and is often compared to the two panels which were painted for the church of Sta Margherita, Bisceglie, and are now on display in the Pinacoteca Provinciale at Bari. One panel (discussed in Chapter Two) depicts St Nicholas with scenes of his life; the other St Margaret (Figs 2.25, 3.73).[233] This section will analyse the iconography of the St Nicholas panels for the first time, an exercise which allows for insightful correlations to be drawn between the two saints, in particular of the events of their lives and how they were perceived.

The Bisceglie and St Nicholas the Pilgrim panels start at different points in the lives of the saints: St Nicholas at his Birth, because this was the time he performed his first miracle; St Nicholas the Pilgrim as he embarks on his pilgrimage to the West, because his role as a pilgrim was how he was identified, and is indeed how he is represented in the central panel. The saints led very different lives, and this fact is emphasised by the scenes of St Nicholas's consecration as the Bishop of Myra, and St Nicholas the Pilgrim's presentation as a poor, shoeless pilgrim. Despite this, there are several prominent parallels between the scenes chosen for the panels. Firstly, both panels feature a scene involving a rescue at sea, positioned in the middle of the right-hand row of scenes. The boat on the St Nicholas the Pilgrim panel has a small, lowered sail, allowing the

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[231] The titles of these scenes are taken from Kaftal (1965), pp. 816-21. See also Mariani (1984), pp. 146-47, who identifies some scenes differently, for example Mariani describes the final scene as pilgrims visiting the tomb of the saint, and does not mention a miracle. As no other cycle of the life of St Nicholas the Pilgrim survives, the source for these scenes cannot be known; however, the source may have been literary, and may have included the 3 *vitae* of St Nicholas the Pilgrim mentioned above, on p. 175, fn. 211.
[232] Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, p. 152.
[233] Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 152-53.

figure of the saint to stand prominently. The white sail does not catch the viewer's attention as do the sails in the three boat scenes on the Bisceglie panel, and in the second St Nicholas the Pilgrim boat scene (where the slave is possessed by the devil) the boat is not obvious at all. However, the blue background of the sea in both scenes stands out as it provides a strong contrast to the dominant golds, reds and browns of the interior settings of the other scenes. Just as the white sails on the Bisceglie panel emphasise St Nicholas's role as the patron of mariners, the sea miracles of St Nicholas the Pilgrim are also visually dominant within the cycle, drawing attention to this aspect of the saint's personality.

Adjacent to the boat scenes on the right-hand side, both panels also include a scene depicting the saints' liberation of condemned men. These scenes share iconographical features, which probably derive from a common Byzantine source. In both scenes the prison is constructed from an arch resting on two lateral towers, with ironwork bars in the case of the Bisceglie panel. The prison and boat scenes, located in the same position on both panels, may have triggered an association in the mind of the viewer between these two miracles performed by St Nicholas the Pilgrim, and the same two miracles for which St Nicholas was famous.

The links created between the two panels do not necessarily imply that the St Nicholas the Pilgrim panel directly imitated the Bisceglie panel, and the possibility of a common source should be considered. The visual connections between the panels are, however, very provocative. The Trani panel is large (203cm x 114cm), and is a very good quality example of Byzantine art in southern Italy, certainly comparable in standard to the Bisceglie panel. Yet St Nicholas the Pilgrim was a local saint, and the surviving material evidence pertaining to his cult, which will be discussed below, indicates that the cult was not widely dispersed. It is reasonable to suggest that the patron of the Trani panel understood the advantages for the newly-established cult of evoking the other St Nicholas. Bisceglie is situated only a few kilometres along the coast from Trani and was a stop on the pilgrimage route between Trani and Bari.[234] Travellers in the region may have seen both *vita* panels, and may have made the connections between them. The iconographical similarities may be too subtle, and we do not know how the panels were originally displayed; yet it is interesting that the St Nicholas the Pilgrim panel does not feature an identifying inscription.[235]

In conclusion, the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino and the St Nicholas the Pilgrim panel display many similarities to the church of S. Nicola at Bari and the Bisceglie panel. These links were important for the establishment of the cult of the new saint: association with an older, popular saint would give prestige to the younger cult.[236] This theory suggests that the nature of the cult at Trani was emulative, rather than competitive. A consideration of the history of the town of Trani, and its relationship with Bari, gives further support to this theory, and will be the focus of the following section.

Although Bari was the most important and prosperous town in Puglia for the majority of the Middle Ages, other towns also flourished. By the eleventh century, Trani was a wealthy town with a busy and successful port. Under Norman rule Trani maintained its autonomy, unlike Bari, and as a result the town benefited from a flourishing trade relationship with the Byzantine Empire that brought the town enormous prosperity.[237] Trani was, for example, the principal port for drapery commerce in the region.[238] The relationship with the Eastern Empire was strengthened in the mid-eleventh century when the town elected Bishop Giovanni from Constantinople, who

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[234] See the pilgrimage account of Abbot Nikulás, discussed above; see p. 156. Hill (1983), p. 178.

[235] The St Nicholas the Pilgrim panel does contain red inscriptions to identify the scenes, but I could not discern an inscription which identifies the central figure. The inscriptions are however very worn.

[236] The same could be said for the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino: the new church was built on top of a pre-existing church and crypt, which would also have given prestige and a perceived history to the cult. This action demonstrates that the saint was assimilated into and accepted by the local community.

[237] Trani was a free Republic, capable of electing its own magistrates and making its own laws. See Touring Club Italiano, *Puglia, Lucania, Calabria* (Milan: Touring Club Italiano, 1937), p. 132; Schettini (1967), p. 9. For the trade relationship with Byzantium, see Maria Sirago, 'Il sistema portuale di Trani dal Medioevo all'Unità', *ASP* 51 (Bari: Società di Storia Patria per la Puglia, 1998), p. 115.

[238] Babudri (1957), p. 45.

became an imperial and patriarchal ambassador for the town.[239] Trani also had strong relations with other Italian towns, in particular Amalfi, Genoa, Pisa and Venice. In the mid-thirteenth century a Venetian community was established in Trani, with councils elected by the doges of Venice.[240] Trani shared equal ecclesiastic importance with Bari as the town also obtained an episcopal seat following the fall of Canosa to the Saracens in the eighth century.[241]

During the reign of Emperor Frederick II the prosperity of Trani increased, and the emperor built fortifications and a castle by the port.[242] The town's imperial connections are reflected in the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino: a fragmentary mosaic pavement survives on the floor of the apse, depicting Emperor Alexander the Great. The theme of this pavement was later echoed in the famous mosaic floor which fills the entire nave of the cathedral of Otranto, which also contains a representation of Alexander the Great, dated 1163-65 (Figs 3.74, 3.75).[243] In addition to the prosperity of the town and its imperial connections, Trani was also an important town because of its role in the development of maritime law. In 1063 a very influential set of maritime codes, entitled the *ordinamenta maris*, was compiled in the town.[244] Furthermore, Trani

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[239] Belli d'Elia (1975), p. 68.

[240] Sirago (1998), p. 118. Bari also had a Venetian community: in 1002 Doge Pietro Orseolo helped liberate Bari from Saracen forces, and in commemoration a church of S. Marco was built in the city. For centuries after, Venetians had a presence in the city and were commercially active there. This information is provided on site at the church of S. Nicola, Bari.

[241] In the 8th century the town of Canosa was destroyed by Saracens. The bishops abandoned the town, staying briefly in Siponto before moving the episcopal seat to the cathedral of Sta Maria (later S. Nicola Pellegrino) at Trani. The bishop took the title of *Episcopus Sipontinus*. In the following centuries there followed a feud between the bishops of Trani and Bari for the material inheritance of the cathedral of Canosa. For the decline of Canosa and the early bishops of Bari, see Cioffari (1992), pp. 33-38. See also Stea Baldo, *Saggio critico sulla storia di Trani* (Milan: Gastaldi, 1954), p. 26.

[242] For the Castello Svevo at Trani, see *Il Castello Svevo di Trani. Restauro, riuso e valorizzazione* (Naples: Electa, 1997). Frederick II left his mark in several Puglian towns, building castles in Trani, Bari, Oria and Barletta. See Franco Biancofiore, et al, eds, *Puglia* (Milan: Electa, 1966), p. 270. In the 15th century the Angevin kings further defended the town by building an arsenal with an enormous galley that could transport 160 men (plus 450 bottles of oil). See Sirago (1998), p. 125.

[243] Benedettelli (1999), p. 603. For this pavement, as well as others in churches at Venice and in Puglia, see Pina Belli d'Elia, 'I pavimenti musivi medievali pugliesi nel quadro della cultura artistica adriatica', in *Storia dell'arte marciana: i mosaici*, ed. Renato Polacco (Venice: Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi Venezia, 11-14 Oct. 1994), pp. 30-45. The precise date of 1163-65 is provided on site at the cathedral of Otranto by *Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici della Puglia*.

[244] For the *ordinamenta maris*, see Saverio Nisio, 'Degli "ordinamenta et consuetudo maris" di Trani', *ASP* 16 (1963), pp. 5-64, see esp. pp. 34-38 for the text of the *ordinamenta*. See also Giovanni Battista

is mentioned by travellers passing through en route to Bari and to the Holy Land as an important port for departure.[245]

Trani was therefore more than an obscure town on the Puglian coast; it was wealthy, flourishing and well-known. Such a successful town did not need to compete with the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari for commercial reasons. This shrine may, however, have incited rivalry that was motivated by devotional needs. The accounts of the 1087 translation of the relics of St Nicholas state that a group of nine sailors from Trani and Monopoli accompanied the sixty-two merchants from Bari who stole the saint's body from Myra.[246] However, the relics were not shared between these towns, but were taken complete to Bari, a decision that may have been an influential factor in the establishment of the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim. As discussed in previous chapters, patron saints were an important source of civic identity and pride in medieval Italy. Trani's original patron saint was the little-known bishop saint of Brindisi, St Leucius, whose relics were acquired by the town in the seventh century. The prestige that the cult of this saint brought to Trani did not compare to that which the cult of St Nicholas brought to Bari. The cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim may have therefore been promoted in emulation of the shrine at Bari, in order to glean prestige. As a new patron saint, St Nicholas the Pilgrim would have provided a source of pride for the residents of Trani; association with the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari would have enhanced the new shrine's reputation and given the cult additional prestige.[247]

Beltrani, *Su gli antichi ordinamenti marittimi della citta di Trani, lettera al comm. N. Alianelli* (Trani: Vecchi, 1873); Bronzini (1989), p. 10.

[245] For example, between 1159 and 1167 Benjamin of Tudela, a Jewish pilgrim who travelled to Italy, Greece, Syria, Egypt and Palestine, visited various towns in Puglia, including Trani, Bari, Taranto, and Otranto, from where he set sail for Greece. Benjamin also witnessed pilgrims, merchants and crusaders departing from the port of Trani. See Cesare Colafemmina, 'L'itinerario Pugliese di Beniamino da Tudela', *ASP* 28 (1975), pp. 81-100.

[246] According to the account of Niceforo Beneventano. See Corsi (1988), p. 14. See also Carabellese (1960), p. 315; Cioffari (1984), p. 50.

[247] Thompson (2005), p. 216. Thompson discusses the cult of St Margaret of Cortona in the period 1369-84, concluding that while local hostels and taverns did get business from pilgrims, generally communes did not promote their saints as a source of cash. Rather, devotion to the local shrine should be indicative of civic patriotism. See also Antonio Rigon, 'Dévotion et patriotisme communal dans la genèse et la diffusion d'un culte: le bienheureux Antoine de Padoue surnommé le 'Pellegrino' (†1267)', in *Faire*

It is difficult to determine the level of popularity of the medieval shrine of St Nicholas the Pilgrim at Trani, and to what extent his cult was supported in Italy. The corpus of surviving art works pertaining to the cult, which will be discussed below, is very limited, and concentrated in the region of Puglia. I have not encountered any examples of pilgrimage to the shrine of S. Nicola Pellegrino, only of travellers passing through Trani en route to the Bari and other Puglian ports. The cult did cross the Adriatic to Dubrovnik: the 1574 Apostolic Visitation to the monastery of St Stephen at Dubrovnik, which held one of the most important relic collections in the region, lists a relic of the tibia of St Nicholas the Pilgrim amongst its possessions.[248] The Visitation does not mention when the monastery came to own the relic; it does, however, indicate how far the local cult may have spread. Significantly, an artistic link has been established between the cathedrals of Trani and Dubrovnik: in 1199 the *protomagister* Eustasio of Trani worked on the sculptural decoration of the cathedral of Dubrovnik. The cathedral was destroyed by an earthquake in 1667, but a sculptural sample is preserved in the city's museum representing the sleeping Jacob and two prophets. These figures closely resemble those from the sculpted portal of the main entrance to the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino at Trani (Figs 3.76, 3.77).[249] This artistic link offers a possible means for the dissemination of the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim across the Adriatic.

As mentioned, very little material evidence pertaining to the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim survives in Italy. Besides the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino at Trani and the *vita* panel discussed above, I have identified only seven representations of the saint in Italian art from the Middle Ages.[250] The following section will discuss these images as a corpus for the first time, an

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Croire. Modalités de la diffusion et de la réception des messages religieux du XIIe au Xve siècle (Rome: Collection de l'école française de Rome, 1981), p. 267.

[248] The Dubrovnik Visitation mentions: 'Tibia S. Nicolai peregrini argenteo tegmine'. ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 28, Ragusa (1573-74), f. 578r.

[249] Maria Stella Calò Mariani, 'La Puglia e l'Europa nel XII secolo', in *Medioevo, arte lombarda. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, 26th-29th settembre 2001*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Milan: Electa, 2004), pp. 579-80.

[250] Kaftal mentions only 2 representations of St Nicholas the Pilgrim: the *vita* icon, and a fresco from the crypt of the Candelora at Massafra, dated to the 13th or 14th century, discussed below. See Kaftal (1965), pp. 813-22. The PICA lists only the representation of the saint on the bronze doors at Trani, also discussed below. A publication from an exhibition held in Trani in 1994 to celebrate the 900th anniversary of the

exercise which reveals further connections between the iconography of this saint and that of St Nicholas.

An image of St Nicholas the Pilgrim survives in Trani on one of the magnificent bronze doors originally located in the main west portal of the cathedral. This set of bronze doors is one of only a handful produced in Italy at the end of the twelfth century (Fig. 3.78). They were cast between 1179 and 1186 by the artist Barisano of Trani, who also produced sets for the cathedrals of Ravello, near Amalfi, and Monreale in Sicily.[251] The doors at Trani are formed of fifty-four bronze plaques fixed to two wooden doors which display a complex iconographical programme. Thirty-two of these represent figures of prophets, saints, mythological creatures and Christological scenes. The remaining twenty-two plaques display stylised vegetable motifs. One of the figurative plaques, on the fourth row from the bottom on the right-hand door, represents St Nicholas the Pilgrim (Fig. 3.79). The saint appears in the simple, short garments of a pilgrim, without shoes. In his left hand is a staff surmounted by a cross, and a pilgrim's purse is worn across his body. The saint's face is beardless to indicate his youth, and his right hand is raised in blessing. At the saint's right foot is a small kneeling figure of the artist Barisano. The appearance of the titular saint on the main entrance doors to the cathedral is to be expected; this plaque also shows an example of personal devotion to the saint, as the artist is depicted in an act of

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death of St Nicholas the Pilgrim lists all the examples mentioned in this chapter, apart from the lead seal (see below). See Mario Schiralli and Alessandro Loprete, eds, *Guida alla mostra fotoiconografica. Comitato per le celebrazioni IX centenario transito San Nicola Pellegrino* (Trani: Comitato per le Celebrazioi IX Centenario Transito San Nicola Pellegrino, 1997). The iconography of St Nicholas the Pilgrim is not analysed in any of the above.

[251] Sarlo (1897), p. 12. For a discussion of the 3 doors and their iconography, see David A. Walsh, 'The Iconography of the Bronze Doors of Barisanus of Trani', *Gesta* 21, no. 2 (1982), pp. 91-106. Other sets of doors, by other artists, can be found at, for example, Venice, Monte S. Angelo, Pisa and Amalfi; see Guglielmo Matthiae, *Le porte bronzee bizantine in Italia* (Rome: Officina, 1971). For details of the 1949-52 restoration of the doors at Trani, see Geleo and Jacobitti (1999), pp. 605-09. The date of the bronze doors at Trani is uncertain. Bertaux dates them to 1175, although there is no inscription; see Bertaux (1968-78), vol. 1, pp. 418-28, esp. p. 419. The accepted view, following stylistic analysis, is that the Trani doors were produced after those at Ravello, which are securely dated to 1179, but before those at Monreale, believed to have been produced after the famous Bonanno doors on the west façade, which were executed in 1186. See Geleo and Jacobitti (1999), p. 605. The doors at Trani were originally located at the main western entrance of the cathedral but have since been removed for preservation and are displayed just inside the entrance to the upper church.

veneration. On Barisano's doors at Ravello and Monreale, the artist inscribed the words *civis Tranensis*;[252] perhaps Barisano's pride in being an inhabitant of Trani was associated with his devotion to the town's patron saint.

A contemporary image of St Nicholas the Pilgrim appears on a lead seal, dated 1180, preserved in the archive of the church of S. Nicola Pellegrino. The front of this seal represents a bust of the Virgin with the infant Christ, while on the reverse are busts of St Leucius and St Nicholas the Pilgrim accompanied by the inscription 'SLE. SNI' (Fig. 3.80).[253] St Nicholas the Pilgrim is further distinguished by his lack of beard. A later, thirteenth-century representation of the saint appears on a stone carving originally located on the entrance to the city walls of Barletta, and now preserved in the Museo Diocesano at Trani. (Fig. 3.81).[254] Built by Emperor Frederick II, the Barletta walls were constructed at the same time as the town's castle as part of the emperor's defensive initiative, and the entrance was later destroyed between 1840 and 1846. The iconography of the stone relief mirrors that of the bronze plaque from the cathedral doors at Trani, and also the later *vita* panel discussed above. These similarities suggest that the stone relief was produced in Trani, and perhaps given as a gift to the town of Barletta, located just along the coast.

The remaining four surviving images of St Nicholas the Pilgrim are in fresco. Two of these form a pair that are iconographically consistent with the examples discussed above. One is a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century fresco from the rock-cut crypt of Sta Maria della Candelora at Massafra, located inland just north of Taranto (Fig. 3.82).[255] The fresco programme of the crypt contains a series of saints, which includes St Nicholas. St Nicholas the Pilgrim stands beside St Stephen in a bay on the south wall. Again, St Nicholas the Pilgrim is beardless and shoeless, and

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[252] See Giovanni Battista Beltrani, *Per Trani, per la terra di Bari, per la regione pugliese* (Trani: Paganelli, 1920, 2nd edition), p. 131.

[253] For the seal, see Engel (1972), p. 109.

[254] The museum is currently closed for renovation. For the carving, see Cassano, et al, eds (1998), p. 325.

[255] For the crypt, originally located beneath the now-lost church of S. Marco, see Castelfranchi (1991), esp. p. 209.

wears a simple, knee-length tunic with a pilgrim's purse. He holds his right hand in blessing. The saint is also identified by a Latin inscription to the right of his head.[256]

The crypt of Sta Maria della Candelora is another example of a Puglian rock-cut shrine decorated by Greek artists as discussed earlier in this chapter. The unprecedented appearance of St Nicholas the Pilgrim in this context is curious. Perhaps the saint was chosen because he was a Greek pilgrim and was therefore connected to the Orthodox East. Castelfranchi has suggested that his presence indicates that he may have been the titular saint of the crypt; if so, this monument constitutes one of only a few monuments dedicated to this saint which survive.[257] The presence of St Nicholas the Pilgrim within the fresco decoration of a crypt so far from Trani indicates that the reputation of the saint did succeed in spreading beyond the immediate vicinity of his shrine. Perhaps a traveller to the East had passed through Trani on his return to Massafra; iconographical similarities between the fresco and the figure of the saint on the *vita* panel in the Museo Diocesano suggest the latter may have influenced the former.

The second from this pair of fresco representations is from the eleventh-century church of Sta Maria di Giano near Bisceglie, just along the coast from Trani (Fig. 3.83).[258] This image of St Nicholas the Pilgrim, identified by an inscription,[259] is dated to the fifteenth century and is attributed to one Giovanni di Francia, who also painted a crucifix for the cathedral of Trani that is now lost.[260] This fresco and the *vita* panel discussed above were both produced near Bisceglie and have strong iconographical links, greater so than the links between the panel and the crypt fresco at Massafra. The Bisceglie fresco displays very similar clothing to the figure of the saint on the panel, including two thick, black lines running vertically downwards from the saint's shoulders. This fresco is therefore likely to have been inspired by the Bisceglie panel.

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[256] The inscription reads: S. NICOLAUS PELLEGRINUS.

[257] Castelfranchi (1991), p. 209.

[258] See Schiralli and Loprete, eds (1997), p. 8. I was unable to visit the church, which is unfortunately inaccessible following a roof collapse.

[259] The inscription reads: S. NICOLAUS PEREGRINUS.

[260] This attribution is made by Schiralli and Loprete, eds (1997), p. 8.

The remaining two frescos in the corpus of St Nicholas the Pilgrim images have been identified as representing this saint because of the attributes that he holds; neither image has an inscription. One is located in the right-hand apse of the church of S. Nicola at Bari, the other in the rock-cut church of Masseria Iesce, Altamura (Figs 3.84, 3.85). Both frescoes are dated to the thirteenth century and attributed to the painter Giovanni di Taranto.[261] At Bari, the fresco represents St Nicholas the Pilgrim wearing long, dark robes and a travelling cape, holding a pilgrim's purse in his left hand and a piece of fruit in his right. At Altamura, the saint holds a staff in his right hand and a basket in his left, in which three pieces of fruit are visible. Beside the saint are a group of children who hold his right hand and gaze upwards (Fig. 3.86). The iconography of these two frescoes refers to the episode from the life of St Nicholas the Pilgrim in which the saint distributes fruit to children.[262]

The presence of the image of St Nicholas the Pilgrim in the church of S. Nicola at Bari suggests that the shrine at Trani was not interpreted as a threat. Perhaps the emulative nature of the shrine was recognised, and in return the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim was promoted at Bari. This strengthens the connections between the two St Nicholas cults. In addition, it is interesting that St Nicholas the Pilgrim's attribute at Bari and Altamura of pieces of fruit are reminiscent of the three golden spheres that St Nicholas holds throughout Italy in the later Middle Ages, and in the Vivarini altarpiece, mentioned above, displayed in the church of S. Nicola. In later centuries, visual connections may have been made between the two saints because of these attributes.

The death of Nicholas the Pilgrim in Trani provided an opportunity for the town to share in the region's flourishing pilgrimage trade, and also to seek prestige through association with a successful shrine in a neighbouring town. The discernable links between the artistic manifestations of the cults of Sts Nicholas the Pilgrim and Nicholas at Bari, and indeed between the lives of the saints themselves, established strong connections between the two cult centres.

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[261] The frescoes are attributed thus by Schiralli and Loprete, eds (1997), pp. 7-8.

[262] See p. 175, fn. 211, above.

Trani did not need to compete with Bari for economic reasons; rather the proposed rivalry was born from a desire for the prestige and civic identity that could be provided by a popular saint. The little surviving evidence for the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim indicates that it received limited support that was generally concentrated within the region of Puglia. This suggests that St Nicholas the Pilgrim was important as a local patron saint.

In contrast to the aggressive critique of Benevento, the Tranese approach was one of emulation and imitation. The similarities between the two St Nicholas's at Trani and Bari are significant in the wider context of the cult of the saints in Italy. Chapter One has discussed how older saints that were consistent with the cults of newer saints thrived in the later Middle Ages, as seen in the relationship between Sts Nicholas and Francis. The perceived associations between St Nicholas the Pilgrim and the other St Nicholas exemplify the complicated relationship between old and new saints: saints such as St Nicholas the Pilgrim helped to preserve the relevance and popularity of older saints like St Nicholas, but at the same time older saints played a part in determining the desired characteristics of newer saints. The cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim at Trani is therefore intricately linked with the shrine at Bari, and is important for understanding the impact that the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari had within the cult of the saints in Puglia.

CONCLUSION

In contrast to the general profile of the cult of St Nicholas presented in Chapters One and Two, this case study has shown the unique development that the cult underwent in the region of Puglia. This is evident initially in the iconography of St Nicholas within the region, which retains the Greek identity of the saint. The cult, present in Puglia before the translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Bari, did not undergo a consequent process of Latinisation to the same degree as seen elsewhere in medieval Italy; the only instances in which the saint was represented as a Latin bishop were on works of art imported to the region. Rather, the translation and the subsequent establishment of the shrine at Bari had a profound impact upon the town and the region of Puglia which contributed to the creation of an alternative version of the cult that was intricately connected to the presence and location of the saint's relics. The port of Bari was transformed and became synonymous with the cult of St Nicholas, giving the cult a focus and firmly establishing the port as an important pilgrimage destination.

This chapter has suggested that the phenomenon of pilgrimage was a vital factor for the growth and widespread popularity of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari. Pilgrims not only helped to perpetuate the cult throughout the Latin West, but the shrine itself was able to influence patterns of pilgrimage and draw large numbers of pilgrims to the region. The shrine at Bari was intricately connected to other pilgrimage destinations in the region, in particular the cult site of the Archangel Michael at Monte S. Angelo. The success of the shrine at Bari could not have occurred independently of the other Puglian shrines, and must always be considered in relation to them. Likewise the significant events which occurred following the translation of St Nicholas to Bari, in particular the First Crusade, must also be considered integral to the shrine's development.

Neither can the cult of St Nicholas at Bari be separated from the sea: the coastal location of Bari helped the cult to spread by way of the port's maritime activities, and played a part in defining the saint's role. However, the pre-existing cult of St Nicholas in Puglia shows that he was already considered a saint of the sea; was this preconceived notion a reason for the acquisition of the saint's relics in the first place? The location of the shrine at Bari was therefore both a response to the existing cult, and an influential factor in shaping the cult that would later flourish.

The repercussions of the establishment of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari were complex, reaching beyond the impact of the shrine upon local pilgrimage. Reactions to Bari's possession of the relics of St Nicholas were provoked both within the town and within the wider region at Benevento and at Trani. These rivalries took different forms: at Benevento the competition was antagonistic and critical of the urban identity of St Nicholas at Bari. On the other hand, the rivalry on behalf of the town of Trani was emulative and can be witnessed visually. In this instance the prestige associated with the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari contributed to the creation of a new saint; thus the location of the relics of St Nicholas also had a powerful impact upon local sanctity. The influence of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari is also evident in other aspects, for example church architecture, as echoes of the church of S. Nicola are seen throughout the region.

An important factor in the success of the shrine of St Nicholas was the support given to the cult by the papacy and the rulers of southern Italy. The Normans were responsible for the shrine at Bari, and invited papal involvement when the relics of St Nicholas were translated into the crypt in 1089. In the same year an important church council was held in the church of S. Nicola, bringing the saint to the attention of the entire Latin West. In later centuries Emperor Frederick II and the Angevin kings donated castles, villages and precious gifts to the church, ensuring its prosperity and widespread influence. The cult of St Nicholas at Bari therefore attracted the attention of all levels of society, confirming that the ability of the cult to appeal to diverse social groups was a fundamental factor for the success of the cult, and of the shrine at Bari.

This chapter has demonstrated that the widespread popularity of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari was the result of many complex factors which are intricately linked, all of which must be considered in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how the shrine at Bari functioned, what particular roles it was given, and the impact that it had upon the region of Puglia and the Latin West as a whole. All these various aspects combine to create a profile of St Nicholas and his cult that is exceptional. In the northern maritime centre of Venice, a different combination of factors came together to construct another unique version of the cult of St Nicholas; this will be the subject of the final chapter of this thesis.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE CULT OF ST NICHOLAS IN VENICE

INTRODUCTION

> O … blessed Venice, whose splendour today rests upon twin columns: you possess the lion who brings you victory in war; you possess the helmsman who does not fear storms at sea. You kidnapped the lion from Alexandria with ingenious theft, you stole the helmsman from Greece with striking force.[1]

In this early-twelfth century Venetian document, the helmsman St Nicholas is venerated at a comparable level to St Mark, the state's most celebrated patron saint. This comparison was made following an important event in the history of the cult of St Nicholas in Italy: in the year 1099, twelve years after the translation of St Nicholas to Bari, the body of the saint was stolen from Myra a second time by soldiers from the Venetian navy. The chronicle detailing the theft, which includes the above comparison, was written by an anonymous monk from the Benedictine monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido, where the saint's body was deposited on arrival.[2] His account can be summarised thus:

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[1] 'O vere beata bisque beata Venetia, que fulges geminis hodie subnixa columnis: habes utique leonem, qui te victoriosam facit in prelio; habes nauclerum, qui non timet tempestatem in pelago. Leonem ingegnoso furto de Alexandria rapuisti, nauclerem de Grecia manifestis viribus abstulisti.' English translation by the author. This quote is taken from the early-12th-century anonymous account of the translation of St Nicholas to Venice, which will be discussed below. See Monachi Anonymi Littorensis (1895), p. 267. See also Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, col. 1233.

[2] Monachi Anonymi Littorensis, 'Historia de traslatione Sanctorum magni Nicholai, terra marique gloriosi, eiusdem avunculi alterius Nicolai, Theodorique martyris pretiosi de civitate Myrae in monasterium San Nicolai de Littore Venetiarum'. This chronicle is preserved in 5 manuscripts: 2 in Rome and 3 in Venice. The earliest, from the early-12th century, is located in Venice: Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana (hereafter cited as BMV), MS Cod. Marc. Lat. IX, 28, as in Otto Demus, *The Church of San Marco in Venice. History, Architecture, Sculpture* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1960), p. 90, no. 126. Transcriptions of this chronicle were first published by Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, cols 1220-33, and Corner (1749), vol. 9, pp. 2-3. The *Translatio* was also recorded by the chroniclers Zeno, Abbot of the monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido, and Stefano Magno (d.1572), who claimed to have taken the information from a different Abbot of S. Nicolò, Bartolomeo III of Verona. See *Venezia e Bisanzio* (exhibition catalogue, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, 8 Jun.-30 Sept. 1974), ed. Sergio Bettini (Venice: Electa, 1974), p. 49; Flaminio Corner, *Notizie storiche delle chiese e monasteri di Venezia, e di Torcello* (Padua: Stamperia del Seminario, 1758), pp. 50-54. A useful French translation of the full

In 1099, the Venetian fleet joined the forces of the First Crusade heading to the Holy Land under the command of the son of Doge Vitale I Michiel (1096-1102). Before departing Venice, the soldiers visited the monastery of St Nicholas on the Lido to implore the saint's protection.[3] The fleet then set sail along the coast of Dalmatia and around the Peloponnese, arriving at the island of Rhodes in October of that year, where they became delayed by a successful engagement against a Pisan fleet. Following their victory, the Venetians learned that Jerusalem had already been successfully liberated by the crusading armies, so they turned their attention instead towards Asia Minor, and the shrine of St Nicholas. Landing at the port of Myra, the soldiers searched the abandoned town – destroyed a century earlier by Saracen invaders – until they discovered the shrine of St Nicholas guarded only by four monks. Easily overcome, the guardians led the soldiers to the tomb that had been despoiled years earlier by merchants from Bari. They revealed, however, that the Barese merchants had robbed the wrong tomb, and that the body of St Nicholas still remained in the church in Myra, in a tomb alongside his uncle, also called St Nicholas, and a St Theodore. The Venetians therefore joyfully recovered the true relics of St Nicholas, authenticated by the sweet odour they released, and returned with the fleet to Venice on 6 December, the feast day of St Nicholas. The bodies were taken to the church of S. Nicolò di Lido where Abbot Vitale I received their delivery. There, the relics began to exude a sweet-smelling oil, or 'manna', as they had in Myra, which was bottled in Murano glass vials and given to pilgrims.[4]

The significance of the acquisition of the body of St Nicholas for the Republic of Venice was swiftly declared by an early-twelfth-century mosaic inscription in the apse of the church of S.

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anonymous Latin account can be found in Monachi Anonymi Littorensis (1895), pp. 253-92. For a helpful summary of the documents, see Demus (1960), p. 90, no. 126.

[3] The cult of St Nicholas in Venice predates the translation of his relics to Lido; this will be discussed below.

[4] A murano glass vial containing oil from the tomb of St Nicholas was attested by Bartolomeo III of Verona, Abbot of S. Nicolò di Lido, in 1445. See Marin Sanudo, *Le vite dei dogi 1423-1474*, ed. Angela Caracciolo Aricò, trans. Chiara Frison (Venice: La Malcontenta, 1999), vol. 1, p. 645, no. 3.

Marco, where St Nicholas was represented alongside three other state saints: Mark, Peter and Hermagoras (Fig. 4.1):

> It was right to display these four saints here, the care of whose bodies surpasses every other glory of the Venetians. Through them [Venice] is esteemed and prospers on land and sea, and it shines forth, renewed and complete. May it never be abandoned by these saints.[5]

Italy now had two important centres for the cult of St Nicholas based upon the presence of the saint's remains. As at Bari, the cult that flourished in Venice offers a fascinating case study, and an alternative path of development for the cult of St Nicholas in Italy; yet there is no existing survey of his cult in Venice which incorporates visual and architectural evidence. Literature concerning the cult of St Nicholas in Italy generally focuses upon the cult in Bari and Puglia, with Venice treated briefly during discussion of the saint's translations.[6] Similarly, in the histories of Venice, St Nicholas is frequently overshadowed by St Mark. While the cult of St Mark was undeniably the most significant and celebrated in Venice, this chapter will expose the integral importance of St Nicholas to the Republic of Venice, and the cult's contribution towards the development of the Venetian state's sense of civic identity and pride.

The cult of St Nicholas in Venice developed dual aspects: on the one hand the saint was adopted and promoted by elite authorities as a symbol of state power and as a protector of the

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[5] 'QUATTUOR HOS JURE FUIT HIC P(RO)PONERE CUR(E) CORPORIBUS QUORUM PRECELLIT HONOR VENETOR(UM). HIS VIGET HIS CRESCIT TERRAQ(UE) MARIQ(UE) NITESCIT INTEGER ET TOTUS SIT AB HIS NU(M)Q(UAN)Q(UE) RELICTUS.' The inscription and its translation are taken from Thomas E. A. Dale, 'Inventing a Sacred Past: Pictorial Narratives of St Mark the Evangelist in Aquileia and Venice, ca. 1000-1300', *DOP* 48 (1994), p. 63, fn. 50. According to Otto Demus, the inscription was probably added to the apse mosaic programme during repair work following a fire in 1106. See Otto Demus, *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), vol. 1, p. 63.

[6] See, for example, the chapter by Pasquale Corsi, 'La traslazione di San Nicola da Myra a Bari', in Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 89-96. The cult in Venice was not addressed by the 2006 *San Nicola: Splendori d'arte d'Oriente e d'Occidente* exhibition at the Castello Svevo, Bari.

Republic's fleet; on the other, the saint appealed to the wider population as a less defined popular figure who could respond to a broader variety of devotional needs. This chapter will explore both the ideological and popular roles of St Nicholas in Venice, examining in particular the monuments dedicated to the saint: the two St Nicholas chapels in the doge's palace, the original eleventh-century church of the monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido, the convent of S. Nicoletto dei Frari, and the parish church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli.[7] These monuments are remarkably diverse, each offering an insight into a different aspect of the cult of St Nicholas, as well as into Venetian civic and religious life.

A study of the St Nicholas monuments in Venice is problematic, because only two still stand today. S. Nicoletto dei Frari was closed during the Napoleonic suppression, and while some parts were converted to the present state archives, the rest was destroyed. In the doge's palace, the first chapel was damaged by fire, and the second taken down during later rebuilding. The original church of S. Nicolò di Lido was demolished in the seventeenth century when the present church was built. Nevertheless, archival documents and antiquarian descriptions do survive, which offer helpful clues for reconstructing the buildings. Despite the significance of these monuments, some of which have received individual attention in recent scholarship, they have not been assessed collectively with the aim of gaining a greater understanding of the function, meaning and significance of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice.[8] Likewise, important developments in the saint's iconography, witnessed in the mosaics of the church of S. Marco and surviving altarpieces, have also been overlooked.

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[7] There were other altars or chapels dedicated to St Nicholas in Venice. During my own study of the 1581 Apostolic Visitation to Venice I found 19 others. 2 are referred to as a 'capella': 'Altare Sancti Nicolai consecratum cum cappella' in the monastery of Sta Maria Charitas, and 'Capella S. Nicolai' in the parish church of S. Jacobi (or S. Giacomo dell'Orio). Neither chapel survives. ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 96, Venice (19 Feb.-11 Aug. 1581), ff. 79r, 157v. The remaining 17 foundations are inferred from references to St Nicholas altars in the Visitation document: for example, altars are mentioned in the Franciscan monastery of Sta Maria Angelori (fol. 39v); the 'Monasteri S Stephani Protomartire' (fol. 48r), and the parochial church of 'S. Joannis Decolati' (fol. 162v). Peter Humfrey claims there were 22.5 altars dedicated to St Nicholas in this Visitation, but does not list them. See Humfrey (1993), p. 64, table 4.

[8] See, for example, the study of the church of S. Nicolò di Lido: Fabbiani (1989). Otherwise the monuments are generally treated cursorily, for example by Tramontin, et al, eds (1965), pp. 218-20.

The cult of St Nicholas that developed in Venice reflected the multi-faceted nature of the saint's hagiography. As St Nicholas had performed miracles for diverse social groups, his cult in Venice could respond to the varying needs of these groups. This chapter will show that as a result of this adaptability, in the centuries following the translation of his relics to Venice the cult of St Nicholas became an essential part of the religious, social and ceremonial fabric of Venetian society.

PART ONE: A STATE SAINT

The apse inscription in the church of S. Marco clearly articulated the pride of the Venetian state in acquiring the relics of St Nicholas. These relics, alongside those of Sts Mark, Peter and Hermagoras were, according to the inscription, exalted above all others, and their possession was a source of glory and prosperity for the Republic. As befitting such an important state saint, the cult of St Nicholas established a strong presence at the heart of Venice, in both the church of S. Marco and the doge's palace. The cult also became an integral element for state ideologies, as the church of S. Nicolò di Lido became incorporated into an important civic ritual.

ST NICHOLAS AND THE CHURCH OF S. MARCO

In the church of S. Marco, St Nicholas had been celebrated within the liturgy before the Venetian acquisition of his relics. According to the *Kalendarium Venetum* of the eleventh century, 6 December was marked as the saint's feast day.[9] St Nicholas also had a very strong visual presence within the church of S. Marco, and his image appears multiple times: on a pair of external bronze doors, in mosaic, and on the cover of the high altarpiece.

The earliest surviving representations of St Nicholas in the church of S. Marco also predate the saint's translation to Venice. The first is located on the set of bronze doors in the

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[9] Stefano Borgia, ed., *Kalendarium venetum saeculi XI ex cod. m. s. membranaceo bibliotheca S. Salvatoris Bononiae* (Rome: Apud Benedictum Francesium, 1773), as in Tramontin, et al (1965), pp. 32-23.

south portal, known as the *porta di S. Clemente* (Fig. 4.2).[10] These doors were produced in Constantinople around the year 1080, and were most likely donated to the church of S. Marco by Emperor Alexius I Comnenos (1081-1118), who handsomely rewarded the Republic of Venice for its assistance in his war against the Normans (1082-83).[11] The doors contain twenty-eight panels, of which twenty-two are figurative representations of Christ, the Virgin, and saints. At present these plaques are out of order, and were probably originally arranged with Christ and the Virgin at the top above a descending Byzantine hierarchy of the saints, with three rows of apostles, one of church fathers, and a final row of military saints.[12] St Nicholas currently appears in the third row from the top, on the right-hand side, but may have originally formed part of the group of Orthodox Church fathers, which also included Sts John Chrysostom, Basil and Gregory, located on the fifth row.[13] Thus St Nicholas first appeared in the church of S. Marco in his role as an Eastern Church father, as he frequently appeared in Byzantine art.

The second pre-translation appearance of St Nicholas occurred within the mosaic decoration of the apse. Here the saint is represented alongside Sts Peter, Mark and Hermagoras, dispersed between three windows on the semicircular apse wall, beneath the enthroned Christ in the conch and the honorary inscription discussed above (Fig. 4.3). These four saints are patrons of Venice: St Mark had been the state's celebrated patron since the acquisition of his relics in 829; Venice also possessed relics of St Peter, to whom a chapel was dedicated in the church of S.

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[10] For the bronze doors from the *porta di S. Clemente*, see Matthiae (1971), pp. 97-101. See also Margaret English Frazer, 'Church Doors and the Gates of Paradise: Byzantine Bronze Doors in Italy', *DOP* 27 (1973), pp. 145-62.

[11] As suggested in *Le porte bizantine di San Marco* (Venice: Scuola grafica del Centro arti e mestieri, 25 Apr. 1969), p. 14. In the *Alexias*, Anna Comnena describes how her father, Emperor Alexius I Comnenos, enlisted the help of the Venetian fleet in his war against Robert Guiscard. When the Venetian navy gained an important victory at Butrinto, the emperor expressed his gratitude by rewarding the Republic with gifts and honours, giving the doge the title of *protosebastos*, allotting an annual payment of gold to all the churches of Venice, and exempting the state from customs taxes in all ports under Roman control. See Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*, trans. Edgar Robert Ashton Sewter (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), p. 191.

[12] Frazer (1973), p. 152.

[13] This original arrangement is suggested by Frazer. It is not known when the plaques were rearranged or why. Frazer (1973), p. 152, fn. 27.

Marco. St Hermagoras was the legendary disciple of St Mark and Bishop of Aquileia whose relics were also kept in the treasury of S. Marco.[14]

The apse mosaic programme that survives today has been altered from the original during fifteenth-century restorations; the four saints are, however, part of the original programme, which Otto Demus dates to the late-eleventh and early-twelfth centuries.[15] According to Demus, the figures of Sts Nicholas and Peter were erected as part of the first decoration works on the newly constructed third church of S. Marco, complete before the 1093 consecration.[16] Sts Mark and Hermagoras are dated to shortly after a fire in 1106.[17] The apse inscription, dated to the first two decades of the twelfth century, appears to have been added as an afterthought, inserted in the narrow space between the heads of the saints and the decorative band above, perhaps in response to the acquisition of the relics of St Nicholas only a few years before.[18] The figure of St Nicholas largely survived the fifteenth-century fire: his head and right hand, plus the majority of his drapery, are original. St Nicholas wears orthodox episcopal vestments, and his covered left hand holds a book while his right is raised in blessing. In his posture, which adopts a Byzantine frontal pose, St Nicholas is isolated from Sts Peter, Mark and Hermagoras, whose pose, gestures and direction of gaze interact with one another. In contrast, St Nicholas faces the viewer.

St Nicholas's second mosaic appearance in the church of S. Marco occurs in the south dome (Figs 4.4, 4.5). Otto Demus has described the mosaic programme of this dome as 'disappointing' because, unlike the other domes which display detailed scenes such as the Pentecost, the south dome contains only a central medallion with just four single figures of

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[14] See Otto Demus, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1988), p. 20. For Sts Mark and Hermagoras as patron saints of Venice, see Dale (1994), pp. 53-104. Venice had other patron saints, including St Clement, also the titular saint of a chapel in S. Marco, and St Theodore, whose figure appears on top of a column in the Piazzetta opposite the doge's palace.

[15] Demus (1988), p. 20.

[16] For the building history of the church of S. Marco, see Demus (1960).

[17] Demus (1988), p. 23.

[18] For the apse inscription, see the chapter by Rudolf M. Kloos, 'The Paleography of the Inscriptions of San Marco', in Demus (1984), vol. 1, pp. 297-99.

standing saints, with no other decoration between.[19] The four saints are identified by inscription as Leonard, Blaise, Clement and Nicholas, who stands on the northern axis. The mosaics of the south dome are dated to the end of the twelfth century; however, the dome was damaged by fire around 1419, and the figures of Sts Nicholas and Blaise were restored soon after.[20] It is therefore not certain how similar the present-day figure of St Nicholas is to the original.

Despite Demus's unfavourable assessment of the programme of the south dome, the figure of St Nicholas in fact displays a subtle, but important, iconographical development from the representation of the saint in the apse. In the south dome, St Nicholas again wears orthodox vestments, and raises his right hand in blessing. The saint's facial features, however, suggest that this figure is not a direct copy of the apse mosaic. In the south dome, St Nicholas's forehead is much wider and does not have the swirl of hair present in the apse mosaic that is characteristic of eastern representations of the saint.[21] Chapter Two has discussed the iconographical developments of the figure of St Nicholas in Italian art as the saint became assimilated into Latin culture. Demus does not identify any significant iconographical developments in the south dome St Nicholas, which he attributes to a lack of inventive force.[22] However, the broadening of the forehead and absence of hair swirl – more common in Italian representations of the saint – reflect the east-to-west iconographical developments of the image of St Nicholas evident on a greater scale in Italian art.[23] The retention of orthodox garments in the south dome illustrates the influence of Byzantine art in the mosaics of S. Marco, and may show a concern with maintaining continuity to ensure that St Nicholas was still recognisable. The garments also create a clear

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[19] Demus (1988), p. 46.

[20] The 12th-century date is not secure. The mosaic programme of S. Marco was mostly finished by the end of the 12th century, with significant additions in the 13th century because of architectural changes. See Demus (1988), pp. 10-12, 188-202. Demus suggests the south dome mosaics are contemporary to the apse mosaics; the subtle iconographic changes to the figure of St Nicholas suggest they are later. For the restoration of the figures of St Nicholas and St Blaise, see Demus (1988), p. 7.

[21] For example, St Nicholas displays a swirl of hair and a narrow forehead in the 13th- or 14th-century Byzantine *vita* icon from the monastery of St Catherine at Mt Sinai, discussed in Chapter 2. For the icon, see Ševčenko (1999), pp. 149ff.

[22] Demus (1988), p. 46.

[23] In Italian art, the hair swirl is present in many cases, but is generally much less pronounced. See, for example, the *vita* panel from Bisceglie discussed in Chapter 2.

visual connection between St Nicholas and St Blaise, another eastern saint whose relics were brought to Venice from Sebaste in Cappadocia.[24]

As discussed in Chapter One, the recent article by John Osborne devoted to the mosaics of the south dome argues that the four saints represented were chosen because of their importance to the Gregorian Reform in the Roman Church.[25] The saints were also significant as Venetian state saints, and by the time the south dome mosaics were erected, Venice had acquired relics of all four saints depicted. St Clement was also the patron of the corresponding southern chapel of the church, and St Leonard also had an altar in the church of S. Marco.[26] The positioning of these saints in the south dome was perhaps dictated by ceremonial practices, as the doge would enter the church of S. Marco through the chapel of S. Clemente, which contained a door leading directly from the ducal palace.[27] Upon entering the church, the doge would have been greeted by the south dome mosaics representing four of the city's honoured patron saints. St Nicholas was highly visible within the apse of S. Marco; he was also one of the first saints the doge would have seen when entering the church.

The third mosaic representation of St Nicholas in the church of S. Marco is located in the atrium (Fig. 4.6). In the thirteenth century, probably following an earthquake in 1223, the vaulting system of the atrium was extended to include the north wing, allowing for further mosaic decoration.[28] On the arch between the fifth and sixth cupolas of the north wing, the bust of St Nicholas is represented within a medallion. Here, the saint holds an open book in his covered left

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[24] According to an 11th-century inscription on the altar of St Clement in the south chapel of S. Marco, the relics of St Blaise were amongst those contained within. The date of the Venetian acquisition of the relics of St Blaise is uncertain and may be as early as the church's original foundation. See Demus (1960), pp. 16-17.

[25] Osborne (1995), pp. 19-28. See Chapter 1, p. 46, above.

[26] Only 5 altars in the church can be dated as early as the 13th century. The main altar was dedicated to St Mark, those of the choir chapels to Sts Peter and Clement, and those of the transepts to Sts John the Baptist and Leonard. There was no altar of St Nicholas or St Blaise. Later additions to the altars include: St Anthony Abbot as joint patron of the St Leonard altar, which in 1618 became the shrine of the Miraculous Relics of the True Cross and is now dedicated to the Holy Sacrament; an altar of St Isidore in 1355; the Madonna dei Mascoli in 1430; St Paul in 1462 and St James in 1471. See Demus (1960), p. 43.

[27] Demus (1960), p. 47.

[28] See Demus (1988), p. 127-29, for details of the extension.

hand and blesses with his right, and again he wears the garments of an orthodox bishop. Demus suggests an interpretation for the presence of St Nicholas here based upon the identity of the surrounding saints. Opposite St Nicholas on the arch is the bust of St Blaise, below which is a full-length, standing figure of St Peter Martyr, the counterpart to St Dominic, who appears below St Nicholas. According to Demus, this group of figures represents a pictorial commentary on Venice's attitude towards the 1249 Inquisition: Sts Dominic and Peter Martyr, who participated in the Inquisition, are being 'neutralised' by the figures of Sts Nicholas and Blaise, both patron saints of Venice, who rise above them.[29]

A more likely reason for this choice of saints, however, is the close relationship which developed between the Dominican order and the Venetian state in the mid-thirteenth century. The saints present in the north wing had strong connections to Venice,[30] and in 1217 St Dominic supposedly visited Venice and was granted a small oratory there in which to preach. By the mid-thirteenth century the Dominican order had a strong presence in Venice, and in 1246 land was donated by Doge Jacopo Tiepolo (1229-49) for the building of the first Dominican church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo.[31] By the end of the century, three doges had chosen to be buried at SS. Giovanni e Paolo, before any ducal tombs were established at Venice's most important Franciscan convent, Sta Maria Gloriosa dei Frari.[32] This was a significant break from tradition, as

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[29] Ibid., p. 160. Pope Innocent IV (1243-54) sent Dominican inquisitors to Venice. See Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002, 3rd edition), esp. pp. 99-114.

[30] Demus has identified other Venetian state saints in the mosaic decoration of the north wing of the atrium, including Sts Peter and Clement, as well as St Agnes, who was a titular saint of a church in Venice, and St Sylvester, whose relics were owned by the Republic. See Demus (1988), p. 160.

[31] See Deborah Howard, *The Architectural History of Venice* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2002), p. 76. This date is disputed: see Franca Zava Boccazzi, *La basilica dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venezia* (Venice: F. Ongania, 1965), pp. 22-25.

[32] The 3 doges buried at SS. Giovanni e Paolo were Jacopo Tiepolo, Ranieri Zeno (1253-68), and Lorenzo Tiepolo (1268-75). The first doge to be buried in the Frari at the end of the 13th century was Jacopo Contarini (d.1289); however, the Frari only gained importance as a ducal burial site after the death of Francesco Danolo in 1339. See Debra Pincus, *The Tombs of the Doges of Venice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 105-06.

before the thirteenth century preference had been given to the church of S. Marco, the monastery of S. Giorgio Maggiore, and the convent church of S. Zaccaria as ducal burial sites.[33]

The church of S. Marco was favoured for ducal burial because of the strong relationship between the doge and the cult of St Mark. In the ninth century the original church of S. Marco was constructed as the doge's palace chapel, and in 1249 the privileges and responsibilities of the doge towards the church were made explicit in the *Promissione* document of Doge Marino Morosini (1249-52).[34] The thirteenth-century lunette mosaic of the Porta Sant'Alipio, which depicts the relics of St Mark being brought into his church in the presence of the doge, illustrates the responsibility of care for the relics assigned to the doge (Fig. 4.7).[35] The choice of three doges to overlook their traditional relationship with the church and cult of St Mark, in favour of burial in SS. Giovanni e Paolo, is indicative of strong ducal support for the new mendicant order. The atrium mosaics of S. Marco were therefore erected at a time when very public support was extended by the Venetian state towards the Dominican order: it is probable that the inclusion of Sts Dominic and Peter Martyr within this programme reflects this support, rather than representing a visual analogy of the Dominican role in the Inquisition.

The position of the Dominican saints next to Sts Nicholas and Blaise, and other saints with established connections to the Venetian state, could also have been an intentional means of promoting the Dominican order in Venice. Through the mosaics, Sts Dominic and Peter Martyr were effectively assimilated into the esteemed history of the church and state of Venice. The mendicant orders were eager to forge associations with existing cults to gain the authority of tradition. This may have been especially pertinent in the mid-thirteenth century, when St Peter

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[33] For the early burial sites of the doges, see Pincus (2000), pp. 167-68. Another exception was Doge Domenico Contarini, who chose to be buried in the church of S. Nicolò di Lido: see p. 221, fn. 100, below.

[34] For the *Promissione*, a document stipulating the obligations and responsibilities of the doge towards the church and relics of St Mark, see Pincus (2000), pp. 10-12.

[35] According to Debra Pincus, the strong relationship between the church of S. Marco and the Venetian state is signified by the Porta Sant'Alipio mosaic, and the interior mosaic representing the rediscovery of the relics of St Mark, the *Apparitio*. See Pincus (2000), pp. 10-11. See p. 235, fn. 156, below, for the *Apparitio Sancti Marci*.

Martyr was canonised in 1253 less than a year after his death, and association with an older, widely venerated saint would offer his cult authority and approval.[36] As St Nicholas was also an important state saint, Sts Dominic and Peter Martyr became visually connected to the prestigious Venetian hierarchy of saints. The relationship between the Dominicans and St Nicholas can also be seen in nearby Treviso, where the largest Dominican church in Italy is dedicated to St Nicholas (Fig. 4.8),[37] and in the Venetian church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo where, according to the 1581 Apostolic Visitation to Venice, a relic of St Nicholas could be venerated in a silver tabernacle.[38] Chapter One has discussed the role St Nicholas played for the Franciscan Order at Assisi and Rome; the cult of St Nicholas in Venice provides another example of how the saint appealed to a mendicant order, albeit for very different reasons.

Two final representations of St Nicholas within the medieval mosaic decoration of S. Marco date to the mid-fourteenth century. The first is located within the mosaics of the baptistery, on the east wall of an arch spandrel (Fig. 4.9).[39] Here the saint is gesturing towards a model of a church, perhaps to emphasise his role as a bishop; the saint also wears the garments of an orthodox bishop, with a distinctive *omophorion*. The second mid-fourteenth-century representation is located in the chapel of St Isidore (Fig. 4.10).[40] In this case St Nicholas is depicted as part of a pair of scenes: on the east wall a *Deesis* scene shows Christ flanked by Sts Mark and Isidore while opposite, the Virgin is accompanied by Sts Nicholas on the right and John

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[36] For the life of St Peter Martyr, see Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 277-91.

[37] The church of S. Nicolò at Treviso was built after 1230. The Dominicans were the first mendicant friars to arrive at Treviso, and in 1230 the community was allocated an area in the suburbs of the city for the construction of their church. See Silvio Tramontin, 'Aspetti di vita religiosa a Treviso nei secoli XIII-XIV', in *Storia di Treviso*, ed. Ernesto Brunetta (Venice: Marsilio, 1991), p. 399.

[38] The Visitation records a 'Reliquie S. Nicolai episcopi et Confessoris in tabernaculo argentio', although it does not indicate what date the relic arrived, or from where. ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 96, Venice (19 Feb.-11 Aug. 1581), f. 60v.

[39] For the baptistery mosaic, see the PICA.

[40] After the 14th century, St Nicholas was represented a further 2 times in the mosaic decoration of S. Marco. In the mid-16th century, St Nicholas appeared again in the baptistery alongside other Venetian saints, including Sts Isidore, Theodore and Pietro Orseolo. See Tramontin, et al (1965), p. 145. Lastly, St Nicholas also appeared on the west façade of S. Marco, on the upper storey in a niche below the south lunette, dated to the 17th century. See Demus (1984), vol. 2, p. 193.

the Baptist on the left. These mosaics are dated to 1355, at the time of the chapel's construction.[41] In this programme St Nicholas, dressed as an orthodox bishop, occupies a prestigious position alongside the Virgin and St John the Baptist. Significantly, the two *Deesis* scenes invite comparison between St Nicholas and St Mark, who occupies the corresponding position on the facing scene. As two important state saints it is appropriate that they, as well as St Isidore (the titular saint of the chapel) should substitute the traditional figures of *Deesis* scenes. This mosaic also demonstrates that St Nicholas was considered by the Venetian state to be one of the more important patron saints of the Republic after St Mark.

Also in the mid-fourteenth century, St Nicholas was represented again within the sanctuary area of S. Marco. The saint appears prominently on the Pala Feriale, the cover of multiple wooden panels which protected the precious gold and enamel high altarpiece, the Pala d'Oro, on weekdays (Figs 4.11, 4.12).[42] The Pala Feriale was painted in 1345 by Paolo Veneziano and his sons Luca and Giovanni, according to the panel's inscription.[43] The upper tier of the Pala Feriale represents, left to right: St George, St Mark, the Virgin, Christ as the Man of Sorrows, St John the Evangelist, St Peter, and St Nicholas, all identified by inscriptions. The lower tier presents seven scenes from the life of St Mark: *St Peter Ordaining St Mark*; *St Mark Healing Anianus*; *The Apparition of Christ to St Mark*; *The Martyrdom of St Mark*; *St Mark Saving the Ship which Carries his Body to Venice*; the *Apparitio*, and *The Tomb of St Mark*.

In his recent article on the Pala Feriale, Hans Belting observed that Paolo Veneziano's altarpiece reflected a general trend in Venetian art of the mid-fourteenth century, which adopted features from contemporary Byzantine art.[44] The Pala Feriale assimilated the Greek *iconostasis*

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[41] This date is given by the PICA. See also Demus (1984), vol. 2, p. 69.

[42] For the Pala d'Oro, see David Buckton and John Osborne, 'The Enamel of Doge Ordelaffo Falier on the Pala d'Oro in Venice', *Gesta* 39, no. 1 (2000), pp. 43-49.

[43] The Pala Feriale has an inscription on the scene depicting St Mark's rescue of the boat bringing his relics to Venice, situated on the bottom centre compartment. The inscription reads: M.C.C.C.XLV.MenSe APriLIS:DIE:XXII.MAGisteR.PAULUS.Cum.LUCA.ET.IOHannE.FILIIS.SUIS.PInXERUnT.HOC.OP-US. See Mauro Lucco, ed., *La pittura nel Veneto. Il Trecento* (Milan: Electa, 1992), vol. 1, p. 37.

[44] Hans Belting, 'Dandalo's Dreams: Venetian State Art and Byzantium', in *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557). Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture*, ed. Sarah T. Brooks (New York:

into the Italian polyptych altarpiece type, creating a ‘hybrid’ of forms, which, according to Belting, may have been the artist’s intention.[45] The arrangement of the figures mirrors that of icons from an *iconostasis*, with a row of saints with Christ at the centre.[46] In his position at the top-right hand corner of the panel, St Nicholas is appropriately represented as an orthodox bishop, consistent with his appearances in the mosaic decoration of S. Marco. The saint wears red vestments including an *omophorion* with black crosses, and holds a book in his left hand while his right hand is held in blessing. In contrast to St Peter in the adjacent compartment, who turns towards the central Man of Sorrows, St Nicholas gazes towards the viewer, as he does in the apse mosaic. The eastern-inspired arrangement of the Pala Feriale, and the saint’s Byzantine frontality and orthodox clothing, strongly identify St Nicholas as an eastern bishop saint.

In summary, between the late-eleventh and mid-fourteenth centuries, St Nicholas was repeatedly represented within the church of S. Marco, indicating that the saint remained important to the Venetian state for centuries following the translation of his relics. Furthermore, the saint’s images were highly visible: on the exterior bronze door St Nicholas could be seen by those using the south portal; in the atrium, he was on display to everyone entering the church. In the south dome, St Nicholas appears alongside other state saints, chosen because of his importance to the Reform popes, and was one of the first saints visible to the doge upon entering the church. In the apse of S. Marco, the most prestigious location in the church, St Nicholas appears twice, and his importance as a state saint is confirmed by the honorary inscription added after the translation. Furthermore, in the chapel of St Isidore, St Nicholas is a visual counterpart to St Mark, the most important Venetian state saint. In each representation St Nicholas appears as an orthodox bishop saint, suggesting that his eastern origins were particularly celebrated by the state. The orthodox vestments were most likely chosen because St Nicholas traditionally appeared thus in Byzantine

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Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006), pp. 138-53. For the Pala Feriale, see also Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1970), esp. pp. 46-47. For details of restorations of the Pala Feriale, see Bettini, ed. (1974), fig. 89.

[45] Belting (2006), p. 141.

[46] Muraro (1970), p. 46.

mosaic representations;[47] they are however suggestive considering the Venetian tradition of displaying victory over rivals within the decoration of the church of S. Marco.

THE PALATINE CHAPELS

The importance of the cult of St Nicholas to the Venetian state was perhaps best exemplified by the two chapels dedicated to the saint erected within the doge's palace. These chapels no longer survive, but written sources pertaining to their building, maintenance and even decoration are abundant, although at times uncertain. An important documentary source for the chapels is the work of the nineteenth-century Venetian illustrator Francesco Zanotto, whose *Il Palazzo Ducale di Venezia*,[48] drew upon the antiquarian works of Marin Sanudo and Giuseppe Cadorin.[49] Recent scholars have drawn attention to the need for caution when studying these sources, because the two chapels dedicated to St Nicholas within the doge's palace, which were built in different centuries but at one point coexisted, were occasionally treated as one.[50]

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Doge Pietro Ziani (1205-29) built a chapel dedicated to St Nicholas, probably located at ground level in the east wing of the doge's palace, in the area just north of the present *Scala dei Censori* (Fig. 4.13).[51] According to Sanudo, and later Rannusio and Sansovino, the building was erected in fulfillment of a vow made by Ziani to

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[47] For the iconography of St Nicholas in Byzantine art, see Ševčenko (1983).

[48] Francesco Zanotto, ed., *Il Palazzo Ducale di Venezia* vols 1-4 (Venice: G. Antonelli, 1842-61).

[49] In particular, Sanudo (1999); Sanudo (1969-70), and Giuseppe Cadorin, *Pareri di XV architetti e notizie storiche intorno al Palazzo Ducale di Venezia con illustrazioni* (Venice: Presso Pietro Milesi Librajo, 1838).

[50] See Debra Pincus, *The Arco Foscari: The Building of a Triumphal Gateway in Fifteenth-Century Venice* (New York: Garland Pub., 1976, reprint of the author's thesis, New York University, 1974), pp. 22-23, fn. 37; Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 259-60.

[51] 'D'alla sinistra del piano, vicino ad una scala per testa è situate la cappella di San Nicolò, fatta l'anno 1212 dal Doge Pietro Ziani per commodità del Prencipe', Sansovino (1663), vol. 2, pp. 221b-222a. Guiseppe Cadorin assembled the 14th- and 15th-century documents regarding the chapel: Cadorin (1838), p. 159, no. 9. The earliest document is dated 11 December 1319, and mentions 'Ecclesia Sancti Nicolai de Palatio'. The location of the chapel is marked by a marble plaque which records a 1362 indulgence given to the chapel by Pope Urban V (1362-70), discussed below, see p. 213. The plaque was originally fixed to the portal of the chapel, and is now attached to the wall on the loggia level of the palace. See Fortini Brown (1988), p. 259.

his predecessor, Doge Enrico Dandolo (1192-1205), during the 1204 siege of Constantinople.[52] The chapel was later demolished in 1525.[53] By this date another, private, chapel dedicated to St Nicholas also existed inside the palace complex, located on the second floor of the east wing, behind the *Cortile dei Senatori* and adjacent to the church of S. Marco (Fig. 4.14).[54] The existence of this second chapel is the cause of much confusion. The date of its construction is not certain, but it existed before 1505 when it was restored under Doge Leonardo Loredan (1501-21) by the architect Giorgio Spavento,[55] and embellished with a façade of marble and a terrace with hanging garden.[56] This chapel survived into the nineteenth century.[57]

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[52] According to Rannusio, 1573: 'Sed Zianus qui pia liberalitate Sacellum Divo Nicolao erexerat, in eiusdem quoque; parietibus, bellum Constantinopolitanum rubrica depictum, quod Sacello adhuc integro Maiores nostri viderunt, à posteris spectari voliut: ut quam Aedem Dandulus difficillimo bello, pro Reipublicae amplitudine vovisset in eadem quoque ipsius studio, et cura, ad totius posteritatis memoriam, & non dubium gloriosae victoriae testimonium, totius belli series spectaretur'. BMV, MS Cod. Marc. Lat. X, 79 [3077], dated 1573, as in Paolo Rannusio, *De bello Constantinopolitano et imperatoribus Comnenis per Venetos et Gallos restitutis, MCCIV* (Venice: M.A. Brogliolo, 1634, first published Venice, 1604), p. 279. See also Marin Sanudo, *Vitae ducum Venetorum*, in *RIS* 22, old series, ed. Ludovico Antonio Muratori (Milan: Mediolani, 1733), col. 538; Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare descritta in XIIII libri* (Venice: Iacomo Sansovino, 1581), p. 233, all as in Fortini Brown (1988), p. 260.

[53] Sanudo reports that the doge attended mass in the new chapel of St Nicholas in the year 1523, and that the old church with the same name would at that time be torn down: 'sichè la chiexia di san Nicolò vechia se ruinerà, ch'è assà bella, dipenta et istoriada, et con musaici, et a la porta uno epitaphio in marmoro di una bolla papal fata al tempo di missier Lorenzo Celsi doxe, per Papa'. (6 December 1523). Sanudo (1969-70), vol. 35, cols 254-55, as in Fortini Brown (1988), p. 260. On 8 October 1525 Sanudo recorded the destruction of the church: 'In questa matina fo principiato a butar zoso la sala di Pregadi qual fu fatta al tempo del Doxe messer Piero Gradenigo, che'e sta un gran peccato et poteva ancora disfar (?) assa' tempo remediata alquanto et si ando' ruinando assai et la chiesola di San Nicolò e tutto, e non compete'. Sanudo (1969-70), vol. 40, col. 15, as in Fortini Brown (1988), p. 260.

[54] See Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 3, p. 3; Marco Boschini, *Le ricche minere delle pittura veneziana* (Venice: F. Nicolini, 1674), p. 54. Zanotto also relates that the chapel was situated at the top of a small flight of steps: Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 2, part 8, p. 5. Andrea Lermer also indicates that the chapel is located on the first floor, behind the Scala de Giganti: Andrea Lermer, *Der gotische 'Dogenpalast' in Venedig. Baugeschichte und Skulpturenprogramm des Palatium Communis Venetiarum* (Munich, Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2005), see the plan on p. 229.

[55] 'la cappella di San Nicolò ... il Prencipe Leonardo Loredano lo ristauro', Sansovino (1663), p. 222a; 'Lo Spavento presentò nota della spese fatte da lui nella cappella di S. Niccolò del palazzo all'uffizii del sale sotto la data 24 marzo 1505, e 24 ottobre dell'anno stesso', Cadorin (1838), pp. 146, 166, fn. 35.

[56] 'D'alla sinistra del piano, vicino ad una scala per testa è situata la cappella di San Nicolò ... di sopra, che ferne per giardino', Sansovino (1663), p. 222a. See also Andrea da Mosto, *I Dogi di Venezia nella vita pubblica e privata* (Milan: Aldo Martello Editore, 1960), p. 220. It is not clear where the hanging garden would have been in relation to the chapel. If there was a small flight of steps up to the chapel, perhaps the terrace was level with the top of these steps, and the ground level of the chapel.

[57] Zanotto mentions that the chapel was still standing in 1816. See Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 1, p. 185.

Further confusion surrounding the palatine chapels has been caused by contemporary reports of a fire which broke out in one of the St Nicholas chapels on 14 September 1483, causing severe destruction.[58] Recent scholars do not agree as to which chapel this fire destroyed, probably because the names given to both chapels by the source materials were interchangeable, varying from 'ecclesie Beati Nicolai de Palatio',[59] to 'capela de palazzo.'[60] Lina Urban Padoan believes the fire occurred in the first chapel;[61] Debra Pincus and Patricia Fortini Brown conclude that the fire broke out in the second, later chapel, leading to its restoration in 1505. This chapel was then dedicated to St Nicholas and shortly afterwards, in c.1525, the original chapel of St Nicholas was destroyed.[62]

I suggest that the following sequence of events is most likely: in 1483 a fire devastated the first chapel of St Nicholas. In 1505, the second chapel, built at an unknown date beforehand, was restored and embellished during the general building works of Doge Leonardo Loredan. It seems reasonable to suggest that this later chapel was built in response to the destruction of the first during the 1483 fire, and that it became known as the 'cappella di S. Nicolò di Palazzo'

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[58] Domenico Malipiero recorded that the fire, which also destroyed many rooms in the Palazzo Ducale including the *Sala Dorata*, was caused by a candle left alight in the chapel following the celebration of mass: 'La notte del 14 settembrio, se ha impiza fuocho in palazzo del Dose, dalla parte de sora. Era stà Cassà acceso el stopin del candelato della capela de palazzo, dapuo detta la messa, et era stè apuzà el depier all'ancona; e la notte, il fuogo ha dà su le tovaglie dell'altar … . Se ha bruzà la capela, le camere, e la sala d'ora delle du nape, dove era depenta l'andata in Ancona del dose Moro'. Domenico Malipiero, *Annali veneti dell'anno 1457 al 1500*, in *Archivio Storico Italiano* 7, 1st series, eds Tommaso Gar and Augustino Sagredo (Florence: [unknown], 1843), part 2, p. 673. See also Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 1, pp. 87, 95, fn. 2, and Marin Sanudo, *Commentarii della guerradi Ferrara* (Venice: Picotti, 1829), p. 105.

[59] This refers to the first chapel, as recorded in a 14th-century document mentioned by Zanotto, entitled *Liber partium Majoris Consilii ec., anno 1318 usque ad 1325.* See Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 1, p. 56, fn. 13.

[60] A name given to the second chapel. See Malipiero (1843), part 2, p. 673, as in Pincus (1976), p. 22, fn. 27.

[61] Lina Urban Padoan discusses how the decoration of the first chapel, identified thus because of the subject of the decoration (see below), was destroyed by the 1483 fire. See Padoan (1988), p. 20. Padoan's source is Giambattista Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale di Venezia, ovvero serie di atti pubblici dal 1253 al 1797 tratti dai veneti archivi e coordinati* (Venice: Visentini, 1868), p. 33.

[62] The second chapel had acquired the name of Cappella San Nicolò by 1506, when 12 ducats were allotted for repairs 'per conzar la Capella nuova di San Nicolo'. Lorenzi (1868), p. 135, as in Pincus (1976), p. 22, fn. 27.

because it replaced the first.[63] The first chapel, being severely damaged and no longer needed, was then destroyed in c.1525. Because of the confusion of the primary sources, this sequence of events cannot be proven; they are however logical and supported by surviving fabric.

Very little physical evidence in fact remains for either chapel. In the case of the second St Nicholas chapel, this includes only a single marble relief, now displayed in the chapel of S. Clemente in the church of S. Marco (Fig. 4.15). The panel is dated 1523 and depicts St Nicholas accompanied by Doge Andrea Gritti (1523-38).[64] Of the earlier, thirteenth-century chapel, the surviving physical evidence includes an inscribed marble plaque commemorating an indulgence granted to the chapel by Pope Urban V (1362-70) in 1362. This plaque was originally attached to the portal of the chapel, and later affixed to the wall on the loggia level of the palace to mark the approximate location of the chapel.[65] Urban V granted the indulgence to all who prayed there for the souls of the condemned who were imprisoned within the palace cells, located very close to the likely position of the chapel.[66] This indulgence may provide an insight into the choice of St Nicholas as the chapel's titular saint: in the legend of the *Praxis de Stratelates*, St Nicholas had miraculously rescued three wrongly condemned men from execution and was, as a result, a patron saint of prisoners. It is not known if the intended purpose and dedication of the chapel were connected with the prison, but it is certainly revealing that at the very heart of the Republic of Venice, St Nicholas was associated with protecting the city's condemned, a humble contrast to the saint's patronage of Venetian activities at sea as celebrated in the S. Marco apse inscription. St Nicholas had been previously associated with the condemned in Rome, through the church of S. Nicola in Carcere, discussed in Chapter One. Perhaps the St Nicholas chapel in the doge's

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[63] See Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 3, p. 7.

[64] See Wolfgang Wolters, *Der Bilderschmuck des Dogenpalastes. Untersuchungen zur Selbstdarstellung der Republik Venedig im 16. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1983), p. 98; Humfrey (1993), p. 48.

[65] For a transcription of the plaque, see Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 3, pp. 8, 29, fn. 4. See also Francesco Sansovino, *Lettera intorno al Palazzo Ducale, e descrizione dei quadric nella sala del gran Consiglio esistenti prima del MD LXXVII, pubblicata da Francesco Sansovino e riprodotta con illustrazioni* (Venice: Alvisopoli, 1829), pp. 42-43.

[66] The plaque reads: '…SOSTACION DE LI PUOVERI PRISONIERI DETEGNUDI IN LE CHARCERE DELO DITO PALACO.' See p. 213, fn. 65, above.

palace demonstrates an awareness of the saint's early cult in Italy, or a desire to echo or appropriate the function given to the cult in Rome.

The surviving evidence of the first St Nicholas chapel also possibly includes two painted panels formerly in the Contini Bonacossi Collection in Florence and now in the Uffizi Galleries. They are attributed to the workshop of Paolo Veneziano and represent miracles from the life of St Nicholas (Figs 2.21, 4.16). Since one of the panels displays possible evidence of fire damage, Rodolfo Pallucchino suggests that the pair originated from the predella of an altarpiece commissioned for the chapel from Paolo Veneziano.[67] According to a 1346 document first published by Antonio Maria Zanetti, a 'magistro Paulo' was paid twenty ducats to paint an altarpiece for the palatine chapel.[68] This chapel, and probably the altarpiece, were later damaged by the 1483 fire.[69] Furthermore, the two panels have been stylistically dated by Michelangelo Muraro to 1340-45, consistent with the dating in Zanetti's document.[70] The form of the two panels gives further indication that they once belonged to a predella cycle: both panels are small (75 x 55 cm), and still self-contained within their original gilded and painted trefoil frames, indicating that the panels were part of a cycle which may originally have been more extensive. The principal subject of the altarpiece is unknown. However, Pallucchini suggests that because the two panels represent miracles of St Nicholas, and because it seems likely that the altarpiece was commissioned for the chapel of St Nicholas, the subject was most probably this particular saint.[71] If the provenance of these panels is correct, the possible fire damage visible on one of the

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[67] Pallucchini claims that the back of the panel depicting *The Three Destitute Maidens* is hollowed out, as if a burnt or blackened part has been removed from it. See Rudolfo Pallucchini, *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 1964), pp. 39-40. See also Muraro (1970), pp. 108-09, 125; Belting (2006), p. 147.

[68] The document, dated 20 January 1346, reads: 'Die 20 mensi ianuarii dedimus ducatos 20 auri magistro Paulo pentore sancti Luce pro pentura unius anchone facte in ecclesia sancti Nicolai de Palacio.' Venice, Archivio di Stato (hereafter cited as ASV), Procuratori di S. Marco de Supra, busta 77, process 180, facs. 1, as in Muraro (1970), pp. 84, 125. See Antonio Maria Zanetti, *Della pittura veneziana e delle opere pubbliche de'veneziani maestri* (Venice: Stamperia de Giambatista Albrizzi a S. Benedetto, 1771), vol. 5, p. 11.

[69] See p. 212, fn. 58, above.

[70] Muraro (1970), pp. 36, 108-09.

[71] Pallucchini (1964), pp. 39-40.

panels supports my theory above: that the 1483 fire occurred in the first St Nicholas chapel. Furthermore, these panels constitute the only surviving medieval cycle of St Nicholas in Venetian art.

The first of the two panels represents *The Birth and Bath Miracle*. St Nicholas, identified by an inscription, is depicted standing in his bath, gesturing towards a nurse to his right while a servant fills his bath water. Behind this scene, the frame is filled with a large bed in which the saint's mother sits while two nurses attend her.[72] The second panel, similarly inscribed, represents *The Three Destitute Maidens*. In the centre of the scene, within an interior setting, the three young girls stand in the company of their father. Two of the maidens face him, but a third is distracted by St Nicholas, who throws three bags of gold through the open window.[73]

Although the miracle of the Three Destitute Maidens was the most frequently represented scene from the life of St Nicholas in Italian art, as discussed in Chapter Two, this panel displays an iconographic anomaly. St Nicholas is represented here as an orthodox bishop, rather than in lay clothing, even though the miracle took place in the saint's youth before he was consecrated in this role.[74] This could have been deliberate: the eastern clothing could represent a desire to make St Nicholas more easily recognisable, or perhaps was influenced by the saint's many depictions within the church of S. Marco, where he always appears as an orthodox bishop. In contrast to the traditional garments of St Nicholas, the clothing of the maidens' father is that of a fashionable Italian with a modern hairstyle.[75] The viewer of this scene is therefore informed that St Nicholas could respond to the needs of contemporary society.

While the physical remains of the palatine chapels are scarce, Venetian antiquarian sources provide information about their decoration, helping to reconstruct their presence within

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[72] For the Birth panel, including arguments for stylistic dating, see Muraro (1970), pp. 108-09, and Bacci, ed. (2006), p. 330.

[73] For *The Three Destitute Maidens* panel, see Francesca Flores D'Arcais and Giovanni Gentili, eds, *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente* (Milan: Silvana, 2002), p. 156. See also Muraro (1970), p. 109.

[74] This also occurs in the fresco cycle at Bolzano, discussed in Chapter 2.

[75] Lucco, ed. (1992), p. 34.

the doge's palace. Again, the two chapels have caused confusion, and some reports are conflicting.

The first chapel is known to have been decorated in the early-fourteenth century. In 1319 the Great Council donated funds for the interior to be painted with scenes from the story of Pope Alexander III (1159-81), who supposedly visited Venice in 1177.[76] The chapel was previously 'tota nuda picturis',[77] and the pictorial decoration was probably associated with the recorded 1323 enlargement of the chapel as part of major rebuilding works in the doge's palace.[78] Funds were also donated by the Procurators of S. Marco towards the embellishment of the chapel,[79] which may have included the altarpiece commissioned from Paolo Veneziano in 1346. The choice of Pope Alexander III as the subject for the chapel's interior decoration was probably in commemoration of Doge Pietro Ziani's father, Doge Sebastiano Ziani (1172-78), who was instrumental in creating a peace treaty between Alexander III and the enemy of the Papal States, Emperor Frederick II.[80] Although no description survives, the decoration may have been a source for eleven fourteenth-century miniatures in a manuscript in the Museo Correr. One scene shows

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[76] 11 December 1319: 'Quia ecclesia beati Nicolai de Palacio est tota nuda picturis: capta fuit pars quod denarii qui provenient de bonis condam cuius de ca'Cuppo mentecapi quibus commune debet succedere, debeant expendi et poni in laborerio picturarum dicte ecclesie, pingendo in ea hystoriam pape quando duit Veneciis cum domino Imperatore et alia que videbuntur', ASV, Maggior Consiglio, Deliberazioni, vol. Fronesis (1318-25), fol. 28v; ASV, Maggior Consiglio, Deliberazioni, vol. Neptunus, no. 1056, fol. 106v, both as in Fortini Brown (1998), p. 259. These documents are also mentioned by Cadorin (1838), pp. 125, 159.

[77] See p. 216, fn. 76, above.

[78] In 1340, under Doge Bartolomeo Gradenigo (1339-43), work began on expanding the palace which included a grand new meeting hall to accommodate the increased numbers of the *maggior consiglio*, which occurred despite the 1297 closing of the Great Council. S. Marco also had rebuilding works in the 14th century, including the chapel of S. Isidore, to house the relics of this saint. See Demus (1960), p. 17. According to a document entitled *Liber partium Majoris Consilii ec., anno 1318 usque ad 1325*, transcribed by Zanotto, the entry dated 7 May 1323 describes the enlargement work carried out in the chapel. See Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 1, p. 52.

[79] The final payment for works in the chapel was made on 3 February 1328: 'Intrante dedimus nos Procuratores ecclesie sancti Marci libras 5 soldos 4 grossorum completos de ratione Palatij pro complemento et integra satifacione librarum 30 grossorum, quas accepimus mutuo de ratione ecclesie Sancti Marci pro laborerio ecclesie sancti Nicholai de Palatio', ASV, Procuratori di S. Marco de Supra, busta 77, process 180, facs. 1 (17th-century copy of a "quaderno delle spese del Palazzo", now lost), as in Fortini Brown (1988), p. 259.

[80] Sanudo (1900-11), vol. 22, part 4, p. 287-90. For Pope Alexander III's visit to Venice, see Cessi (1953), pp. 47-49; Sanudo (1900-11), part 4, pp. 287-97; Padoan (1988), pp. 13-28. For the circumstances leading to the visit, see Luigi Gallo, *Lido di Venezia. Abbazia S. Nicolò* (Lido di Venezia: Istituto Tipografico Editoriale, 1964), pp. 31-34.

Doge Sebastiano Ziani kneeling before the pope, and the emperor and pope making peace as a result of the doge's mediation (Fig. 4.17).[81] The date and artist of the paintings in the St Nicholas chapel are unclear. Cadorin suggested that they may have been produced by either Guariento (c.1310-70) or Paolo Veneziano, but may have confused the wall paintings with the 1346 altarpiece attributed to Paolo Veneziano.[82] However, if the work was completed soon after the 1323 restoration works, Guariento would have been too young to execute them.[83] Therefore, either the walls were painted by Paolo Veneziano shortly after their commission, or they were painted later during the restoration works by Guariento.

Contemporary sources also described the decoration of the chapel of St Nicholas as displaying scenes from the 1204 Venetian conquest of Constantinople.[84] In particular, Sansovino claimed the scenes were painted in green *chiaroscuro*, or grisaille, but it is not clear which chapel he was describing. The scenes may have been painted in the first chapel at the same time as the Alexander III programme, or soon after following the 1323 restoration works. Alternatively, Sansovino could have been referring to a much later cycle in the second chapel.[85] Subsequent decoration and embellishment of the later chapel is more securely documented, and included works by eminent Venetian artists, most significantly Titian, who completed several internal and

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[81] 'Il libro della leggenda degli Apostoli Pietro e Paolo, di S. Albano e della venuta a Venezia di Papa Alexandro III,' Venice, Museo Civico Correr (hereafter cited as MCV), MS Cod. Correr I, 383 (=1479), as discussed by Fortini Brown (1988), p. 260. Fortini Brown includes a summary of the dates proposed for the miniatures, which range from c.1340 to c.1370, dating them after the 1319 decoration of the chapel. The miniatures are also discussed by Padoan (1988), pp. 14-20.

[82] Cadorin (1838), p. 159, fn. 9.

[83] As argued by Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 1, p. 52.

[84] As claimed by Paulo Rannusio, see p. 211, fn. 52, above. See also Sansovino: 'Il Principe in tanto fece la cappella di San Nicolò in Palazzo, in esecutione, come si dice, d'un voto fatto dal Doge Henrico, overo, come altri dicono, per sua commodità. Nella quale fu dipinto l'acquisto di Constantinopoli di verde chiaro & scuro.' Sansovino (1581), p. 233, as in Fortini Brown, p. 260.

[85] See p. 217, fn. 84, above. The term *chiaroscuro* is a late-17th century word used to denote monochrome painting and woodcuts characterized by the use of gradations of lightness and shade. It is not clear whether Sansovino is describing an earlier art work in contemporary language, or a later work of true *chiaroscuro*. The Constantinople scenes could conceivably date from the early-14th century: Giotto used this technique in the Arena Chapel c.1305, although the technique was not common at this time.

external frescoes.[86] These included the four evangelists either side of the high altar, and a scene of the Virgin and child with St Nicholas by the Virgin's right knee and Doge Andrea Gritti to the left, located in a lunette to the left of the altar.[87] In the lunette above the entrance door, St Mark was depicted seated on a winged lion.[88] Outside the church, near the *Scala Coperta*, Titian also painted the Virgin and Child surrounded by clouds and two angels.[89] According to Zanotto, these paintings were whitewashed in 1816 when further building works took place inside the palace.[90]

Around the year 1600, the façade of the second chapel that faced the *Cortile dei Senatori* was decorated with four scenes, which do not survive. The first two scenes were painted by Girolamo Pilotti. One represented a view of the monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido on the feast day of the Ascension, where the doge was depicted being greeted by the monks, and the second a scene where the doge, accompanied by the Senate and ambassadors of the foreign court onboard the *Bucintoro*, were about to perform the ceremony of the Marriage to the Sea, or *Sensa*, on the day of Ascension.[91] In the third scene, painted by Daniele Wandick, a joust was celebrated in Piazza S. Marco in the presence of the doge. The final, smaller scene, located around the entrance, was painted by Giuseppe Alabardi. It represented the Virgin Annunciate with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, flanked by St Mark and the personification of Venice, with an angel holding a model of Piazza S. Marco.[92]

Both St Nicholas chapels within the doge's palace therefore received decorational programmes which displayed elements of Venetian state ideology, victory and pride. The display of such themes within the chapels indicates the continuing importance of St Nicholas for the

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[86] Titian was commissioned by Doge Andrea Gritti (1523-38), who installed a new marble altar. See Sansovino (1663), p. 222a. See also Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 1, p. 53.

[87] Boschini (1674), p. 54.

[88] Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 3, p. 185; Boschini (1674), p. 54. The frescoes surrounding the altar were completed at least by 1523, as the first mass at the altar took place on the feast of St Nicholas, 6 December 1523. See Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 1, p. 53.

[89] Zanetti (1771), vol. 5, p. 127; Boschini (1674), p. 54.

[90] Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 3, p. 185. Perhaps at this time the chapel was also destroyed.

[91] See the discussion of the church of S. Nicolò di Lido below for an explanation of this ceremony.

[92] Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 1, part 3, p. 177, fn. 6. Zanotto's source is the earlier edition of Boschini (1674): Marco Boschini, *Le miniere della pittura* (Venice: Nicolini, 1664), p. 79.

doge, who attended mass there daily.[93] The chapels were private spaces, whose audiences were prestigious and select. In the first chapel, the display of a former doge's mediating role in an important event which concerned the entire Christian world would have portrayed a message of civic pride, as well as a declaration of the significance of the role of the doge within the international Christian community. One of the chapels became a victory monument when it was chosen for the display of scenes of the Venetian conquest of Constantinople. A chapel dedicated to St Nicholas may have been considered an ideal location for these scenes, as the Venetian victory apparently occurred on 6 December: the saint's feast day.[94] While the c.1600 frescoes in the second chapel are later than the period in discussion, they are pertinent because they continue the tradition of using the palatine chapels to articulate civic pride. As well as representing an important state festival, the scene of the *Sensa* would have also perpetuated the cult of St Nicholas in Venice, as the shrine holding the saint's relics, the monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido, was also represented.

THE MONASTERY OF S. NICOLÒ DI LIDO

The cult of St Nicholas was present in the religious and civic centre of Venice before the saint's relics were brought to the city. Yet, the remains were not deposited within the treasury of S. Marco, but at the monastery of S. Nicolò on the Lido, located at the periphery of the city on an island in the lagoon. This relocation was perhaps a response to the saint's role as the protector of seafarers. The importance of the monastery on the Lido and the cult of St Nicholas to the Venetian state at an early date was confirmed by Doge Domenico Selvo (1071-84) who, in 1071, was elected doge in the monastery.[95] The deposition of the relics of St Nicholas in the Lido

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[93] 'la cappalla di San Nicolò, fatta ... per commodità del Prencipe, il quale per legge era tenuto andarni ogni mattina alla messa', Sansovino (1663), pp. 221b-222a; see also Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 2, p. 4.

[94] See Tramontin, et al (1965), p. 219.

[95] Sanudo (1900-11), vol. 22, part 4, p. 153. 1071: 'Dominicho Silvio doxe fo electo ne la chiexia di san Nicolò di Lio, quasi non essendo ancora sepulto il suo precessor, et a vove dil populo chiamando doxe, fo menado in chiexia di san Marco, la qual ancora non era compida, et li fo confirmato da tutti'. See also

monastery greatly influenced the future role of the cult of the saint in Venice. It also allowed the cult to be prominent within the important annual festival of the *Sensa*, a very public display of Venetian ducal ideology. For the Republic of Venice, the monastery was a very important *loco sanctus* for the cult, and the flourishing shrine responded to a variety of needs within Venetian society.

Because of the presence of the relics of St Nicholas, the Benedictine monastery and church of S. Nicolò di Lido, founded in the mid-eleventh century, together constitute the most well-known monument dedicated to St Nicholas in Venice (Fig. 4.18).[96] The present church of S. Nicolò is a seventeenth-century replacement of the original monument that was destroyed, and is located just west of the site of the original church. The following discussion will consider the medieval church, which has recently been the subject of a publication by Licia Fabbiani: *La Fondazione Monastica di San Nicolò di Lido: 1053-1628*.[97] In her book, Fabbiani recreates the medieval church through a thorough examination of antiquarian and archival sources,[98] as well as archaeological and architectural evidence from extensive excavations of the old church over the last seventy years.[99]

Charles Malagola, *Le lido de Venise a travers l'histoire*, trans. Henri Gambier (Venice: Marcel Norsa, 1909), pp. 15-16.

[96] The foundation document for the monastery and church of S. Nicolò states: 'habemus erga monasterium Ord. S. Benedicti'. Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, col. 1216. For a brief history of the Benedictines in Venice, and their settlement on the Lido, see Gallo (1964), p. 15. For other Benedictine monasteries dedicated to St Nicholas in the 11th century, see Clare (1985), p. 54.

[97] See Fabbiani (1989).

[98] The church of S. Nicolò di Lido is mentioned in many antiquarian sources; the most extensive discussions can be found in: Corner (1758), pp. 50-60; Bernardo Trivisano, *Della Laguna di Venezia trattato. Edizione seconda, riveduta e ampliata* (Venice: Lovisa, 1718), p. 73; Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, cols 1216-33, 1245-53. See Fabbiani (1989), pp. 54-57, for a further summary of chronicles and archival sources. The monastery was closed during the Napoleonic suppression and like all other Venetian churches which suffered this fate, documents for the church were taken to the state archives in Venice. They mostly remain there today, although some have been reclaimed by the monastery's own archive.

[99] 3 periods of excavations occurred in the 20th century, the first in 1941 when remains of the old church were first discovered in the north wing of the monastery. Excavations were carried out in the 1960s by Maria Guiotto and later in 1982 by the Soprintendenza Archeologica. See Maria Guiotto, 'Soprintendenza ai monumenti del Veneto: restauri dell'anno 1964', *Arte Veneta* 18 (1964), pp. 251-52; Fabbiani (1989), pp. 53-57.

The monastery and church of S. Nicolò di Lido were founded in 1053 by Doge Domenico Contarini (1043-71), who was buried in the church;[100] Domenico Marengo, the Patriarch of Grado, and Domenico Contarini, the Bishop of S. Pietro in Castello.[101] The monastery was built next to the lagoon at the northern tip of the Lido, a long strip of land surrounding Venice to the south and south-east, which acts as a buffer between the city's islands and the sea (Fig. 4.19). The original eleventh-century church, campanile and sacristries were taken down between 1626 and 1628 following a plea from the monastery's monks to the doge, who lamented the bad conditions of the church and requested a new construction.[102]

Despite the demolition, traces of the old church remain, providing a good indication of the structure and appearance of the eleventh-century monument. Excavations of the foundations show that the church was constructed with a central nave and two aisles, ending in a semicircular

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[100] Contarini most likely chose burial at S. Nicolò because at the time of his death the church of S. Marco was being rebuilt. He was buried in a tomb of porphyry and serpentine, which was lost in 1626 during the building of the new church of S. Nicolò. The monks prepared a new tomb of Istrian stone, which is still located above the door of the west façade. See Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare* (Venice: Altobello Salicato, 1604), vol. 1, p. 174b. See also Gallo (1964), p. 51.

[101] The foundation document for the church attributes its building to 'Dominicus Contareno Dei gratia Venetiarum Dux, et Dominicus Dei omnipotentia san Gradensis Eccleiae Patriarca, et Dominicus miseratione Divina Episcopus Olivolensis'. See Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, col. 1216. The date of 1053 is disputed: Lorenzetti and Guiotto claim the foundation date to be 1043. See Giulio Lorenzetti, *Venice and Its Lagoon. Historical-Artistic Guide*, trans. John Guthrie (reprint: Trieste: Edizioni Lint, 1985), p. 800; Maria Guiotto, 'L'antica chiesa di S. Nicolò del Lido di Venezia', *IVSLA* 56/2 (1947-48), p. 175. This is probably based upon the date given by Corner, whose transcription of the foundation document reads 'Datum in Ecclesia dicti Monasterii anno Domini nostri Jesu Christi 1043. die. 3. Martii.' However, Corner also includes a note suggesting the date to be 1053, because in 1043 Domenico Marengo was not yet patriarch, and Domenico Contarini had only been elected doge for a few months. See Corner (1749), vol. 9, part 1, col. 1216, fn. 9. For a discussion of the conflicting dates, see also Fabbiani (1989), p. 35. Fabbiani suggests the date should be 1053, which would be compatible with the named founders, and allows for a simple transcription mistake for the date from the foundation document. The monastery must have been completed by 1064 because it is mentioned in the investiture document of the Bishop of Padua; see Andrea Gloria, *Codice Diplomatico Padovano* (Venezia: Visentini, 1879-81), vol. 1, pp. 218-19, fn. 189.

[102] The monks of the monastery of S. Nicolò appealed to the doge on 28 November 1622 for a new church, because the old church 'ad ogni parte per la sua antichità minacia ruina et molto angusta et in sito non buono.' ASV, Archivio S. Nicolò di Lido, b. 5, proc. 15, f. 78-79, as in Fabbiani (1989), p. 62. Work on the new church began in 1626, and in 1628 the old church was closed to the public: ASV, Archivio S. Nicolò di Lido, b. 4, proc. 5, f. 18; ASV, Archivio S. Nicolò di Lido, b. 5, proc. 15, f. 84, both as in Fabbiani (1989), p. 62. Corner mentions that on 1 May 1628 the relics of St Nicholas were transferred to the high altar of the new church, which was consecrated in 1634. Corner (1749), vol. 9, pp. 82-83, as in Fabbiani (1989), p. 62. See also Gallo (1964), p. 52; Guiotto (1947-48), p. 179.

apse with two lateral apses (Fig. 4.20).[103] The church also had a portico, below which have been found burial chambers.[104] The location of the original church, just to the east of the present church, can be determined from visible remains. In the exterior wall of the north wing of the monastery are five columns, partly concealed in plaster (Fig. 4.21). These columns and their acanthus capitals are stylistically dated to the mid-eleventh century, and have been identified (according to the foundations) as those which separated the central nave from the southern aisle of the original church, therefore situating this earlier building further south than the present one.[105] Two further columns with ornate, thorny acanthus-leaf capitals from the same period can be seen at the entrance to the present monastery, by the southern exterior wall of the present church (Fig. 4.22).[106]

Further remains from the original church are decorative rather than architectural. In the area corresponding to the south nave, a mosaic pavement of polychrome glass with a regular floral and geometric design was discovered beneath a thick layer of tar. The pavement has been stylistically dated to the mid-eleventh century, and was part of the original floor of the first church (Fig. 4.23).[107] The remains of sculptural details from the original church are preserved in the plaster wall of the internal courtyard of the present monastery, and include a section of a marble frieze showing a spiral and leaf motif, and a sculpture of a terracotta eagle, dated to the eleventh century (Figs 4.24, 4.25).[108]

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[103] For details, see Fabbiani (1989), p. 65.

[104] Several burial sites were discovered beneath the walls of the portico. Tomb chambers with walls of plaster built into the foundations of the portico, continuing around the perimeter wall to the north, contained many skeletons, implying a memorial function. Inside the burial sites were many fresco fragments, stylistically resembling those of the façade (see below). See Fabbiani (1989), p. 68.

[105] These columns were first noted by Guiotto during the 1940s excavations. The discovery of a few capitals half buried in plaster led Guiotto to investigate further, uncovering the 5 complete capitals. See Guiotto (1947-48). The 'corinzi a palmette' capitals were typical of Adriatic architecture, especially of the north between Padua and Istria. See Fabbiani (1989), pp. 65-67, 80-81, for further details.

[106] See Fabbiani (1989), pp. 82-83.

[107] The pavement was restored between 1957-59. See Fabbiani (1989), pp. 67-68, 84-85. For this pavement, as well as others in churches at Venice and in Puglia, including Trani and Otranto, see Belli d'Elia (1994), pp. 30-45.

[108] See Fabbiani (1989), pp. 88, 94.

Significantly, a fragment of fresco from the exterior west façade of the old church was also recovered during excavations (Fig. 4.26).[109] The fragment depicts a section from a scene of the *Prayer in the Garden*: five sleeping, haloed figures are grouped close together, some resting their head in their hands, one resting upon another's bended knee. Behind the group, trees and branches indicate the garden setting. The colours of the clothing and background were recorded by Maria Guiotto as shades of dark brown and yellow.[110] The cartoon used for this fresco is considered by Fabbiani and Demus as similar to that used for the mosaic of the same scene on the south wall of the east wing of S. Marco (Fig. 4.27).[111] If the façade frescoes from S. Nicolò di Lido did indeed influence the mosaic decoration of S. Marco, their loss is extremely regrettable. However, their existence suggests that the medieval church of S. Nicolò was important not only as the resting place of a state saint, but as an influential artistic monument.

In addition to the archaeological remains, archival documents provide substantial clues for reconstructing the old church. For example, Fabbiani notes that an inventory of the church's sacristies from 1371 gives information about the rooms adjacent to the church. A sacristy was positioned at the same height as the church, containing liturgical objects including chalices and dalmatics, as well as gold ornaments used in festivals and paraphernalia for the high altar. A second altar was located on an upper floor of the monastery, corresponding to the first level of the east wing, which held a small archive containing the church's foundation documents.[112] The contents of the first sacristy indicate that S. Nicolò di Lido received substantial and prestigious

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[109] The existence of a portico suggests the location of the west façade for the fresco. The remaining sections of the fresco were destroyed during the German occupation of Venice in the Second World War.

[110] For Guiotto's thoughts on the mosaic, see Guiotto (1947-48), pp. 185-86. See also Bettini, ed. (1974), p. 49.

[111] For details of the fresco, see Fabbiani (1989), pp. 69, 86. The large mosaic of the *Prayer in the Garden* in S. Marco is dated by Demus to c.1220, nearly 2 centuries after the foundation of S. Nicolò di Lido. See Demus (1984), vol. 2, pp. 6-21.

[112] For the inventory, see ASV, Cancelleria Inferiore Notai, b. 73, Notaio Eugubio (de) Angelo, Luca; cc. 14-15, as in Fabbiani (1989), p. 54.

patronage, in the form of precious metalwork. Indeed, the monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido was wealthy, and owned land on the Lido.[113]

In the centuries after the monastery received the relics of St Nicholas, the shrine was given an additional role integral to both the state's religious and civic life, and to the ideological role of St Nicholas as a state saint. According to legend, when Doge Sebastiano Ziano mediated peace between Pope Alexander III and Emperor Frederick II on Ascension Day in 1177, the pope expressed his gratitude by granting a plenary indulgence to all who visited the church of S. Marco on the feast of the Ascension.[114] He also gave Doge Ziani the authority to perform the ceremony of the Marriage to the Sea, known as the *Sensa*.[115] As mentioned in the Introduction to this thesis, during this ritual the doge would symbolically 'marry' the sea, in celebration of Venice's dominion of the Adriatic. The fourteenth-century illumintated manuscript from the Correr mentioned above, which detailed the pope's visit to Venice and is seen as a reflection of the palatine frescoes, also contains a miniature depicting Alexander III presenting a gold ring to the doge, so that he may perform the marriage ceremony (Fig. 4.28).[116]

Details of the ceremony of the *Sensa* were first recorded in the thirteenth century, sometime before the year 1275, by the French chronicler Martin da Canal, in *Les Estoires de*

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[113] At the time of its foundation, the monastery was given extensive surrounding land that was cultivated into vineyards and housed inns administered by the monks. The foundation document grants the monastery 'perpetuo possidendum, cum omnibus et singulis possessionibus, quae nostri juris esse censentur, tam in eodem litore, quam in civate, et districtu Clugiae', Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, col. 1216. The extent of the surrounding land on the Lido owned by the monastery, including the street of Sta Maria Elisabetta, can be determined from maps and plans in the Venetian state archives, published for the first time by Fabbiani (1989), see esp. pp. 11-12. In 1186 Pope Urban III reconfirmed privileges to the monastery: see Gallo (1964), p. 35.

[114] On the indulgence granted by Alexander III, see: 'Dell'origine et accresimento della città di Venetia et isole della lagune principiato dell'anno CCCCXXI et molte alter cose notabile fino l'anno MDLVI', New York, Syracuse University Library, MS Ranke, 69, fol. 72r, as in Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton, Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 105.

[115] The legend of the *Sensa* is discussed by Sanudo (1900-11), vol. 22, part. 4, pp. 287-97, 416. See also Padoan (1988), pp. 13-14. A document presevered in the Marciana Library, *Ceremoniche del Doge di Venezia*, dated to the 1590s, which describes the activities of the doge on the day of the *Sensa*, also states: 'il Doze … andata a sposar il Mar al Lido, et in memoria della concessioni, che fece Papa Alless[andro] III al Doze Sebastian Ziani l'anno M.C.LXXVII. quando che … difender il Papa andò con 40 galere contra ottene figlo d. Fedrico Barbarossa imperatore', BMV, MS Coll. IT VII, 1639 (=7540), fol. 42r. Author's transcription. See also Bardi (1581), p. 153, as in Molmenti (1905-8), vol. 1, p. 227, no. 2.

[116] 'Il libro della leggenda degli Apostoli Pietro e Paolo, di S. Albano e della venuta a Venezia di Papa Alexandro III,' MCV, MS Cod. Correr I, 383 (=1479).

Venise.[117] According to Canal, on the morning of the Ascension the doge left his palace to process through Piazza S. Marco towards his awaiting ship, which took the doge and his retinue out into the lagoon. There, a priest blessed the water of the lagoon, and the doge threw into the sea a golden ring, before the ship turned back amidst great solemnity towards the palace where a grand feast was held in celebration.[118] At some point the festival changed to incorporate a visit to the church of S. Nicolò di Lido. In 1476, an anonymous visitor from Milan described how the doge, wearing long vestments of red and gold, threw a precious ring into the water before heading towards the Lido aboard his boat, the *Bucintoro*.[119] There he attended a mass in the church of S. Nicolò before giving an offering of money to the shrine of St Nicholas and returning to Venice for the feast.[120] In 1483, the Dominican friar Felix Fabri participated in the *Sensa* festival, and

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[117] Martin da Canal, *Les Estoires de Venise: Cronaca veneziana in lingua francese dalle origini al 1275*, ed. Alberto Limentani (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1973, 2nd ed.). For the origins of the ceremony, and further antiquarian sources, see Padoan (1988), pp. 31-32.

[118] 'Or vos conterai coment il fait la procession le jeusdi de l'Asencion; saché que il s'en ist de son palés e s'en vet parmi la place de monsignor saint Marc tot en tel maniere et a tel conpagnie con il fist au jor de Pasque, mes il ne tint pas la voie que l'en vet a saint Jumenian, anceis tint cele que s'en vet a la rive, et illeuc trova sa maistre nef, si entra dedens a tote sa conpagnie et se fet najer jusque en la mer. Et li prestre qu'est aveuc monsignor li dus beneïst l'eive et monsignor li dus gete dedens la mer un anel d'or. Et aprés ce s'en retorne monsignor li dus ariere, a si grant solenité et a si grant feste con il s'en est alés, et desent en seche terre et monte desor li Palés, si trove les tables mises et les viandes aparillees.' da Canal (1973), p. 250.

[119] The celebrated vessel named the *Bucintoro* was constructed in 1311 especially for the use of the doge and the senate during the feast of the *Sensa*, and for receiving distinguished visitors. It is likely that this boat replaced another, probably less ornate, ship for the exclusive use of the doge and senate. The *Bucintoro* was large enough to carry 200 men, and indeed the name is a likely corruption of 'Navilium Ducentorum hominum', as the boat was described in its construction decree. See Vincenzo Maria Coronelli, *Ships and Other Sort of Craft Used by the Various Nations of the World. Venice 1690*, trans. Mario M. Witt (London: Francis Edwards Ltd, 1970), p. 15.

[120] 'Io vidi … il Duxe, vegio de anni LXX, grande et de bono aspeto vestito da pano d'oro cremesimo rizo, la veste longa tanto che due scudieri lo aiutano a portar dicta veste, la bireta de zetonino rosso cum uno frisso d'oro a circho ... et qui andaro a li due castelli, et lo Duxe sposò lo mare a hore XV, d'uno anello de precio di sei ducati. Et poi si ritornò in dietro et veneno audire le messa a Santo Nicollò de Lio ... La messa fu cellebrata cum cantori ... et sonò l'organo le cerimonie del Duxe quando se cantò la lectione, et el Duxe tenete uno candelere cum una torcia bianca in cima apizata ... Et poi se cantò lectione, el Duxe tenete uno candelere cum vangello e fenito se portò lo lobro a basare al Duxe, e poi per ordine ali altri ambassatori. Dapoi vene il tempo de la oferta, et quello che cantava la messa andò al Duxe, el quale Duxe offerse un certo dinaro che teneva ligato dal cavo del fazoleto ... et poi se finite la messa ... Viti montare in Buzimtoro la signoria del Dux et altre persone ... et poi giunsono a Vinegia: el Duxe fece uno disnare a la compagnia ... Ma essendo in Santo Marcho al vespero uno zentilhomo venetiano, el qual me vene a sentar a presso, me disse como lui aveva disnato cum il Duxe et ch'el disnare era stato sumptuoso et richo.' Milan, Archivio di Stato, Cart. Dipl., Venice, die XXIII, 1476, and ex. Principi Domino duci Mediolani, as in Molmenti (1905), pp. 227-28. See also Padoan (1988), p. 48.

noted that the *Bucintoro* was accompanied by a swarm of other vessels on its journey to the Lido.[121]

The documents describing the *Sensa* provide further information about the internal structure of the original church of S. Nicolò di Lido. According to Sanudo, during the service held in S. Nicolò the patriarch and clerics took their seats on the raised presbytery of the church while the doge and the senate remained below in the nave.[122] The choir of the church was evidently elevated above the level of the nave; it was also separated from the nave by a transverse colonnade surmounted by an architrave.[123] The crypt below where the relics of St Nicholas were kept was created from a single vault. Stefano Magno also records that the crypt had five columns and two entrances: one for the faithful to descend in order to venerate the relics of St Nicholas, and the other to exit the chamber. Furthermore, the crypt was decorated with mosaics, which included a representation of St Zeno.[124]

The festival of the *Sensa* was symbolic of the dominance Venice held over the Adriatic, both over other cities in terms of commerce, territory and war; and over the sea itself. By including the monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido in the ceremony, St Nicholas was celebrated by the state as a patron who helped achieve this, by protecting the navy from misadventure at sea. The combination of the role of St Nicholas as the patron of Venetian seafarers, and the location of the

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[121] Felix Fabri, *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, trans. Aubrey Stewart (London: Palestine Pilgrim's Text Society, vol. 9, 1892-97), vol. 2, p. 99. For more accounts of the *Sensa*, see the document from the Biblioteca Marciana detailing the doge's actions on this feast day, which include a mass at S. Nicolò di Lido: BMV, MS Coll: IT VII, 1639 (=7540), *Ceremoniche del Doge di Venezia*, 1590s, f. 42r-v. See also Marin Sanudo, *De origine, situ et magistratibus urbis Venetae ovvero La Città di Venetia (1493-1530)*, ed. Angelo Caracciolo Aricò (Milan: Grafiche G.V., Nov. 1980), pp. 59, 181; Coronelli (1970), p. 16. Coronelli describes the ceremony he witnessed in 1690.

[122] As detailed by Marin Sanudo, who participated in the ceremony of the *Sensa* on 8 May 1513. See Marin Sanudo, *I Diarii (MCCCCXCVI-MDXXXIII)*, eds Rinaldo Fulin, et al (Venice: a spese degli Editori, 1879-1903), vol. 26, p. 221, as in Fabbiani (1989), p. 59, fn. 10.

[123] Fabbiani (1989), p. 55.

[124] According to Stefano Magno, 'le 5 colone che è verso dove è lo coro et corpi de San Nicolò per gar spaciosa quella banda, fu poi levade, et in fra altre figure de musaicho è quella de san Zenon episcopo del suo nome credo in li archi, nota, la giesia che in la parte inferior fin bora ce cerre le vestigie in terra dove erano le colone de là a là verso la giesa che è in sole', Stefano Magno, *Annali Veneti del Mondo* (Venice: Bibl. du Museo Civicò, [unknown]), vol. 2, f. 112-13, as in Malagola (1909), p. 106. See also MCV, MS Cicogna, no. 3530 [266], v. II, c. 113, as in Fabbiani (1989), p. 60, fn. 12, see also pp. 55-56.

church of S. Nicolò di Lido at the mouth of the Venetian lagoon, made the Lido church an appropriate location in which to give thanks for the state's successes at sea. As at Bari, the position of the shrine of St Nicholas at Venice was thus influential in the development of the saint's cult.

The location of the church of S. Nicolò di Lido was also important for perpetuating the cult of St Nicholas in Venice beyond the civic and religious centres of the state. The monastery was visible to everyone entering and leaving the city, as well as from the main islands of Venice,[125] and was commonly visited to give thanks for a successful journey or to pray for safety at the beginning of a sea voyage. Such visitors included soldiers departing for wars;[126] visiting dignitaries including emperors and popes,[127] and merchants and pilgrims. Many pilgrimage accounts survive which mention the shrine of St Nicholas on the Lido. As mentioned above, in 1483, the Dominican friar Felix Fabri visited the monastery on his return from the Holy Land.[128] In 1494 the Canon Pietro Casola also visited the monastery during his journey to Jerusalem.[129] These accounts also provide clues about the original church of S. Nicolò on the Lido: between 1496 and 1499 the pilgrim Arnold von Harff travelled from Cologne to Jerusalem and Compostela, stopping at the church of S. Nicolò di Lido when he departed from Venice for Alexandria. He claimed that 'much finer and further out in the sea [than the monastery of St Andrew de Leye] is a monastery to St Nicholas Eylleo', and that the monastery owned a pitcher

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[125] The monastery and church of S. Nicolò di Lido are visible from all points along the southern edge of the main island of Venice, and from the mouth of the Grand Canal.

[126] See p. 229, fn. 133, below.

[127] Sanudo mentions that on 8 February 1437, 'Emperor Calogiani' visited S. Nicolò di Lido during a visit to Venice. See Sanudo (1999), p. 162. This was Emperor John VIII Palaiologos, who is known to have passed through Venice en route to Ferrara, where he attended the Council of Ferrara-Florence which opened 8 January 1438. See Alexander A. Vaziliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire, 324-1453* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1952, 2nd edition), vol. 1, p. 673. For the Council of Ferrara-Florence, see Jean-Yves Lacoste, ed., *Encyclopedia of Christian Theology* (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 163-65. Sanudo also mentions that in 1452 Frederick Barbarossa accompanied the doge to the Lido for the feast of the *Sensa*. See Sanudo (1999), p. 471.

[128] See Fabri (1892-97), p. 99. See also Hilda Frances Margaret Prescott, *Jerusalem Journey. Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1954), p. 84.

[129] See Pietro Casola, *Canon Pietro Casola's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Year 1494*, ed. M. Margaret Newett (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1907), p. 136.

from Palestine that was used by Christ to turn water into wine, as well as many other famous relics.[130]

These pilgrimage accounts indicate that Venice was an important port for visitors travelling to and from the Holy Land. In fact Venice, along with its rival ports of Genoa, Pisa, Ancona, and Marseilles, competed to benefit from the profits to be made from transporting pilgrims.[131] The popularity of Venice as a port for travelling to and from the Holy Land ensured that the shrine of St Nicholas on the Lido was exposed to a wide international audience. In this respect, the shrine on the Lido mirrored that of St Nicholas at Bari: the saint was present at the departure points of two major Adriatic ports. Whether travellers departed from northern or southern Italy, the cult of St Nicholas was highly visible, and it was to this maritime saint that prayers for a safe voyage were directed.

The location of the church of S. Nicolò di Lido was significant for a further reason: defence. Between 1379 and 1380, Venice was besieged from land and sea by forces from Genoa and Padua in the War of Chioggia.[132] In previous centuries, the Venetian state had engaged in repeated conflicts with the Republic of Genoa, as well as other rival cities and ports throughout northern Italy, the Adriatic and Mediterranean. At the time of the War of Chioggia, greater

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[130] 'Item aber besser hyn vss in dat mer lijcht eyn cloyster zo sijnt Nyclais die eylleo genant. Dae inne is eyn kroich in deme vns herre Jhesus vss wasser wijn verwandelde ind ander vil wijrdichs heyltoms ', Arnold von Harff, *Die Pilgerfarhrt des ritters Arnold von Harff von Cöln durch Italian, Syrien, Aegypten, Arabien, Aethiopien, Nubien, Palästina, die Türkei, Frankreich und Spanien: wie er sie in den jahren 1496 bis 1499 vollendet, beschrieben und durch zeichnungen erläutert hat*, ed. Eberhard von Groote (Cologne: J.M. Heberle, 1860), p. 56. The English translation is from Arnold von Harff, *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff, Knight: from Cologne through Italy, Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Ethiopia, Nubia, Palestine, Turkey, France, and Spain, which he Accomplished in the Years 1496 to 1499*, ed. Malcolm Letts (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1946), p. 68. See also Fratris Felicis Fabri, *Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem* 3, ed. Cunradus Dietericus Hassler (Stuttgart: Sumtibus Societatis Litterariae Stuttgardiensisi, 1849), pp. 429-30.

[131] See Ugo Tucci, 'I servizi marittimi veneziani per il pellegrinaggio in terrasanta nel medioevo', *Studi Veneziani* 9 (Pisa: Giardini Editori e Stampatori, 1985), p. 64, for details of how many pilgrims visited Venice and how much profit Venice made from them in the 14th century. For example, in the year 1384, 600 pilgrims set sail from Venice for the Holy Land, and 4-500 pilgrims would generate approximately 20,000-25,000 ducats. Tucci's source is Fabio Besta, ed., *Bilanci generali della repubblica di Venezia* (Venice: Visentini, 1912), vol. 1, p. 146.

[132] The events of the War of Chioggia were recorded by the chronicler Daniele Chinazzo, in *Chronache della guerra di Chioza tra li Veneziani e Genovesi*, in *RIS* 15, ed. Ludovico Antonio Muratori (Milan: Mediolani, 1729), cols 699-804.

defence for the city was needed. Fortifications were constructed near the monastery of S. Nicolò at the entrance to the Venetian lagoon, the *porto di Lido*, through which the Venetian navy would depart.[133] Here, two large wooden bastions were built to protect the port on either side of the entrance to the lagoon. The port was defended from these bastions by soldiers with crossbows, and could be closed off from enemies by long chains hung between the bastions across the entrance to the port.[134] At this time the city's original defence fortification, the Castel Vecchio (located just north of the monastery of S. Nicolò by the edge of the lagoon), was rebuilt in its present form, and shortly after the war a second castle was built – Castel S. Angelo (Fig. 4.29) – which overlooked Castel Vecchio on the opposite side of the port. These two structures became collectively known as 'the two castles'.[135]

At the end of the fourteenth century, the *porto di Lido* was thus heavily fortified, and acted as the main defence for the city of Venice during future conflicts. The monastery of S. Nicolò also received fortifications, which included a defensive wall and barracks.[136] However, the monastery had traditionally had a defensive function. During the period of the First Crusade, a tower was constructed next to the church of S. Nicolò di Lido to protect the port and monastery,

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[133] There were several entrances to the Venetian lagoon; the *porto di Lido* refers to the entrance at the narrow mouth between the northern tip of the Lido and the Isola le Vignole. See Malagola (1909), p. 11. According to Chinazzo, during the war of Chioggia in 1380, 'molte barche' departed from 'S. Nicolò di Lido con gran avantità di Balestrieri Veneziani', Chinazzo (1729), col. 773. The navy had always departed via this port: in August 1122, a fleet of 200 boats with sails, 40 galleys and 28 ships left the Lido for war. See Lorenzo de Monacis, *Chronicon de rebus venetis ab U.C. ad annum 1354 sive ad conjurationem Ducis Faledro. Accedit ejusdem Carmen de Carolo II, rege Hungariae et anonymi scriptoris de Causis belli exorti inter Venetos et ducem ferrariensem*, ed. Flaminio Corner (Venice: Remondini, 1758), p. 84, as in Malagola (1909), pp. 67-68.

[134] Chinazzo recorded in detail the defences built on the Lido during the war of Chioggia. 1379: 'per meglio difendere esso porto, fecero due Bastioni molto grossi di legame, uno per lato, con Balestrieri e Bombarde in gran quantità con una catena, che ferrava il porto da un Bastioni all'altro ... con tre grosse catene di ferro ... e ciascuno fondone haveva due grossissime anchore.' Chinazzo (1729), col. 722.

[135] See, for example, the 1476 anonymous Milanese account of the festival of the *Sensa*: 'et qui andaro a li due castelli, et lo Duxe sposò lo mare a hore XV'. See p. 225, fn. 120, above. For details of Castel Vecchio and Castel S. Angelo, elements of which still remain today, see Fabbiani (1989), pp. 20-24.

[136] As noted by Chinazzo: 'per maggior sicurezza fecero far'essi Veneziani un gran fosso sopra il Lido appresso la chiesa fi S. Nicolò con un gran Palancado, e molti Belfredi per ferrar la fossa, con molte Bombarde, e vi posero gran gente alla guardia.' Chinazzo (1729), col. 722. Barracks were built in the large space inside the monastery of S. Nicolò to house soldiers returning from the East, according to the 14th-century chronicler Galeazzo Gattari: *Cronaca di Padova di Galeazzo Gattari compiuta da sua figlio Andrea* (Venice: Bibl. di Museo Civico di Venezia, 1379), Jun. 1379, as in Malagola (1909), p. 65.

and also the body of St Nicholas which had recently arrived.[137] The tower was also used for crossbow target practice, and shooting competitions were held by the inhabitants of Venice during festivals.[138] The tower also possibly functioned as a lighthouse, in response to a need for a signalling system at the mouth of the lagoon to indicate the direction of access for the navy.[139]

The church of S. Nicolò di Lido had therefore always been associated with the defence of Venice and the safety of her fleet. The position of the monastery of S. Nicolò at the entrance to the lagoon created a strong link between the saint and the fortifications, built along the *porto di Lido*, and the monastery was an appropriate location for a beacon to guide the city's fleet safely through the port. The monastery reflects the role St Nicholas played as the protector of the Venetian fleet and of the city itself. A testament dated 1398 demonstrates that through the church of S. Nicolò, the cult of St Nicholas became associated with the city's protection, by asking that five hundred ducats should be donated to the monastery of S. Nicolò 'for my soul and for the good and the fortification of Venice'.[140] An additional sense of protection is given by the monastery's proximity to a church dedicated to the Archangel Michael. St Michael was an important Byzantine military saint and protector of the Byzantine army; furthermore, the proximity of these churches reflects the link made between the two saints in Puglia, in the churches of S. Nicola di Bari and Monte S. Angelo on the Gargano peninsular.[141]

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[137] 'Postea ... Veneciam redeunt et ad ecclesiam parvam sancti Nicholai in litore corpora sancta deportantur. Construitur ibi turis pro loci tutamine, manet armatorum, custodia, donec locus securus edificetur'. Andrea Dandolo, *Chronica per extensum descripta, aa. 46-1280 d.c.*, in *RIS* 12, ed. Ester Pastorello (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1938), part 1, p. 223, as in Fabbiani (1989), p. 28, fn. 24. See also Sanudo (1900-11), vol. 22, part 4, p. 145.

[138] In 1498 Sanudo recorded the event of prize-giving to the winner of the competition. See Sanudo (1969-70), vol. 2, col. 266, as in Malagola (1909), p. 63.

[139] As suggested by Fabbiani (1989), p. 20. The lighthouse at S. Nicolò worked together with those at S. Erasmo, Tre Porti and Castel Vecchio.

[140] 'Item voyo ... li altri cinquecento [ducati] sia comprado et spexo in piere et pali per conçar lo lido de Sen Nicolò per l'anema mia et per ben et forteça de Veniexia'. Author's translation. Giorgio Tamba, ed., *Fonti per la storia di Venezia. Archivi notarili: Bernardo de Rodulfis, notai in Venezia (1392-1399)* Session 3 (Venice: Il comitato editore, 1974), p. 355.

[141] The earliest testimony to a church dedicated to S. Angelo on the Lido is dated 1246, and is transcribed by Fabbiani (1989), p. 29, fn. 40: ASV, Archivio S. Nicolò di Lido, b. 5, proc. 13, c. 4. The church was destroyed in the 15th century. The Archangel Michael is considered a military saint because of his victory over the dragon that he expelled from heaven. It is also thought that when the Antichrist arrives, he will

Through the monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido, the cult of St Nicholas in Venice developed according to the role assigned to the saint by the apse mosaic in the church of S. Marco. St Nicholas was not just a saint who could provide safe passage to seafarers departing from the Lido, but his cult was associated with the actual, physical defence of the city. As a maritime state, the protection of the Republic's fleet was paramount, and St Nicholas was honoured for his part in this task through the celebration of mass in his church on the Lido during the festival of the *Sensa*. Just as the cult of St Nicholas represented state ideology in the palatine chapels and the church of S. Marco, the monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido was also incorporated into the display of Venetian civic pride, but this time with the additional prestige given by the presence of the saint's body.

A PROBLEMATIC ACQUISITION

The body of St Nicholas held within the crypt of S. Nicolò di Lido, however, posed a significant problem. Just a year before the Venetian acquisition of the relics of St Nicholas, the body of the same saint had been translated into the crypt of the church of S. Nicola at Bari. If St Nicholas was to be promoted as a state saint in Venice, there had to be no doubt over the authenticity of his relics there. A desire to prove their legitimacy can be inferred from the anonymous twelfth-century translation account discussed in the Introduction above. This account is highly detailed regarding the events of the translation itself, but is also revealing about the purpose of translation accounts, in particular their endeavour to validate relics. In his book *Furta Sacra*, Patrick Geary warns of the dangers of using translation accounts as historical evidence, since they follow an established literary tradition and are heavily propagandist. The *Translatio Sancti Nicolai* is no exception.[142] The account's primary purpose, as with all *translationi*, was to authenticate the relics by giving an account of how they arrived at their new location. The author of the *Translatio*

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rise up and stand forth as defender and protector of the elect; hence his popularity as the patron of emperors and rulers. See Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 642.

[142] Geary (1978), esp. pp. 9-15.

Sancti Nicolai attempted this by refuting the legitimacy of the relics taken to Bari. He claimed that the Barese merchants had in fact despoiled the wrong tomb, and instead it was the Venetian soldiers who returned home with the true body of St Nicholas.

The authenticity of the Venetian St Nicholas relics was, however, repeatedly contested. An interesting, although generally unacknowledged, twist in the history of the cult is the doubt that was occasionally cast over the validity of the saint's relics brought to Venice. Between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, the relics were officially inspected four times.[143] The ceremonial document of the 1347 inspection, ordered by Doge Andrea Dandolo, indicates that the ritual was performed with the purpose of quelling any doubt about the relics' authenticity. The document, transcribed and published by the eighteenth-century Venetian historian Flaminio Corner, contains repeated affirmative statements, for example, 'here rests the body of the great Confessor Nicholas', and '[in this] exposed place, where are the holy relics of St Nicholas the Great Confessor in miraculous glory'.[144] More persuasively, the document also states that: '… one must truly believe, and not be in doubt they [the relics] are his, namely the great Nicholas the Confessor.'[145]

Shortly after the 1347 inspection, the cult of St Nicholas in Venice experienced a period of renewed interest. In 1353 the church of S. Nicoletto dei Frari was founded, and around that time the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli was also rebuilt (both will be discussed below). Any doubts, if they existed, appear to have been momentarily quelled, at least for the upper classes.

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[143] The inspections took place in 1282, 1347, 1399 and 1449. See Fabbiani (1989), pp. 55-56. The first inspection in 1282 was recorded by an inscription on a lead plaque placed on top of the saint's casket, recorded by Ughelli and witnessed in the most recent inspection of the relics in 1992: 'ANNO DOMINI MILLESIMO DUCENTESIMO OCTOGESIMO SECUNDO MENSIS MADII DIE V INTRANTE TEMPORE DOMINI JOHANNIS DANDULI DUCIS ET DOMINI … FUERENT INQUISITA ET INVENTA CORPORA SANCTORUM NICHOLAY MAGNI CONFESSORIS … ,' see Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, col. 1233; Luciano G. Paludet, *Ricognizione delle reliquie di S. Nicolò, 1992* (Vicenza: Edizioni L.I.E.F, 1994), p. 21. For the later inspections, see below.

[144] 'Heic requiescit corpus magni Nicolai Confessoris'; 'fuit apertus locus, ubi Sancte Reliquie Sanctorum Nicolas Magni Confessori in miraculis gloriosi'. Author's translation. Corner (1749), vol. 9, pp. 70-72. Corner's source is Ughelli, who recorded the document in Latin: Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, col. 1233.

[145] 'Ossa vero almifici Nicolai, miraculis gloriosi erant alba velut lac, sed confracta & rupta, que quidem credo, & non dubito esse sua, videlicet magni Nicolai Confessoris.' Author's translation. Corner (1749), vol. 9, p. 72; Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, cols 1233-34.

On 11 August 1399, the relics were inspected again, this time by a monk from the monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido named Donato Contarini, following reports that the urn containing the relics of St Nicholas had started to drip a strange liquid. Because of the liquid's sweet odour, it was acknowledged as the same miraculous oil found at the saint's tomb in Myra, therefore reconfirming the legitimacy of the relics.[146] Despite these assertions of authenticity, the relics underwent a further inspection, performed by Abbot Bartolomeo III of Verona, in 1449.[147] Following the ceremony, Doge Francesco Foscari (1423-57) issued a decree forbidding the further reopening of the tomb of St Nicholas.[148]

Thus the authenticity of the relics of St Nicholas in Venice was repeatedly questioned, but also defended. The roots of the doubt surrounding the relics probably lay in the existence, and international success, of the major shrine of St Nicholas at Bari. The accounts of the 1087 translation of St Nicholas to Bari, made famous by the *Legenda Aurea* and other hagiographical literature, would have contributed to the uncertainty.[149] Because St Nicholas was an important state saint, it would have been imperative that his cult in the city was considered legitimate. The flourishing cult of the saint in Venice, in particular the monuments dedicated to the saint in the doge's palace, his representations in the church of S. Marco, and the incorporation of the church of S. Nicolò di Lido within the *Sensa* festival, indicates that despite the doubt revealed by the inspections of the saint's relics, this was achieved. Even foreign visitors were convinced, as in 1323 the Irish pilgrim Symon Simeonis recalled in his pilgrimage account that 'outside the city, on an island near the port in the monastery of the [Black] Monks, reposes the body of the blessed Bishop Nicholas.'[150]

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[146] The 1399 inspection was detailed by Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, col. 1234. The sweet-smelling oil at the saint's tomb at Myra was recorded by John the Deacon: see Corsi (1988), p. 56.

[147] Ughelli also mentions the 1449 inspection: Ughelli (1717-22), vol. 5, col. 1234. See also Sanudo (1900-11), vol. 22, part 4, p. 163; Gallo (1964), pp. 38-45.

[148] Corner (1758), pp. 58-59.

[149] Voragine mentions the translation to Bari, albeit briefly. See Graesse, ed. (1890), pp. 26-27.

[150] 'Et extra illam civitatem, in insula quadam juxta portum, in monasterio [Nigrorum] Monachorum requiescit, ut dicitur, corpus beati Nicholai episcope et confessoris.' Text and translation from Symon

While the saint's internationally popular shrine at Bari remained problematic for Venice's claim to the true relics of St Nicholas, the *Translatio Sancti Nicolai* confirms that for Venetians, the Bari shrine must have been founded upon a false acquisition. It is not known how the citizens of Venice reconciled the reputation of the shrine at Bari with their own claim to the body of St Nicholas. However, contemporary documents are suggestive of dismissal, and it can be argued, *ex silentio*, that the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari was not recognised. In Venetian documents, St Nicholas was not referred to as 'St Nicholas of Bari', as he was elsewhere in Italy,[151] but rather 'Nicolas Magni Confessoris',[152] or 'Sancti Nicolai de littore'.[153] The latter example identifies St Nicholas with the resting place of his relics on the island of Lido, in the same manner as the additions to the saint's Barese name, i.e. 'S. Nicolam de Bari',[154] or 'portum Sancti Nicholai'.[155] In both locations, the saint's identity is linked to ownership of his relics; in Venice, the saint's relics in Bari are not acknowledged as they are elsewhere in Italy.

The examples discussed above create the impression that the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari was not acknowledged by the Venetian state. Venice rather than Bari possessed the true relics of St Nicholas. Through the cult of a popular saint, Venice could claim superiority over the Puglian city. This sense of competition has been recognised by Patrick Geary, who suggests that the Barese acquisition of the relics of St Nicholas provoked envy in Venetian society. This envy became manifest in a thirteenth-century fabricated miracle of St Mark: the *Apparitio Sancti*

Simeonis, *Itinerarium Symonis Semeonis ab Hybernia ad Terra Sanctam*, ed. Mario Esposito (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1960), pp. 36-37.

[151] For example, the 1406 testament of Michele di Mattiolo, from the state archives at Foligno, mentions 'S. Nicolam de Bari'. Sensi (1992), p. 74. Sensi's source is ASFg, Fondo notarile, 113, Francesco Pucciarelli (1404-06), c. 89.

[152] St Nicholas is thus named in the chronicle of Abbot Martini, recording the inspection of the relics of St Nicholas which occurred in 1347. See Corner (1749), vol. 9, p. 71.

[153] For example, in a document dated 1341 from the Venetian state archives, translated by Fabbiani: ASV, Savi ed Esecutori alle Acque, b. 227, c. 1. See Fabbiani (1989), p. 30, fn. 42.

[154] See p. 234, fn. 151, above.

[155] See p. 163, fn. 158, above, for the Angevin chronicle citing 'portum Sancti Nicholai'. Jones (1978), pp. 218, 422, fn. 5.

Marci.[156] The *Apparitio* claims that following the building of the third church of S. Marco in the late-eleventh century, the 1094 consecration ceremony was delayed because the relics of St Mark had gone missing. After three days of prayer and fasting, the hiding place of the relics was miraculously revealed within the south-east pier of the crossing (Fig. 4.30). According to the *Legenda Aurea*, the location of the relics of St Mark was only known to the doge and the *primicerius*, who were not present to reveal the relics' location.[157] Geary suggests that this rediscovery was intended to reassert the prestige of the relics of the saint in response to the growing popularity of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari.[158] The Venetian theft of the body of St Nicholas only a few years later suggests that the Republic was indeed provoked by the Barese acquisition of this saint.

That the Venetian theft of the relics of St Nicholas from Myra was born from civic envy is difficult to prove. However, Venice and Bari were both strong Adriatic commercial powers, and civic rivalry between the two ports, especially in trade, was a reality. The success of Bari as a flourishing commercial centre, a result of the port's position as the seat of Byzantine, Arab and Norman control in southern Italy, has been discussed in Chapter Three. Venice was, however, the most powerful trading centre in the Adriatic, especially after 1082 when the Republic was granted immunity from customs taxes in Constantinople.[159] While Bari and other Puglian ports established trade links with ports in southern Dalmatia, Venice had in fact claimed sovereignty over these cities, as well as those of northern Dalmatia and Istria, from the year 1000. Doge Pietro II Orseolo's victories against the Dalmatian cities of Split, Zadar and Trogir had earned him and

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[156] Geary (1978), p. 103. The *Apparitio Sancti Marci* was composed by Petrus de Calò, and can be found in Petrus de Calò, 'Apparitio Sancti Marci', in *AASS* 3, Apr., ed. Bollandists (Brussels: Society of Bollandists, 1902-70), pp. 358ff. See also Roberto Cessi, 'L'apparitio Sancti Marci del 1094', *Archivio Veneto* 75 (1964), pp. 113-15.

[157] See Demus (1960), pp. 12-13; Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 268, for details of the loss of the relics. See also da Canal (1973), part 2, p. 219, as in Dale (1994), p. 85, fn. 158. The *primicerius* was the highest ecclesiastic of the church of S. Marco.

[158] Geary (1978), p. 103.

[159] For the *chrysobull* of Alexius I Comnenos (1081-1118) granting this concession, and commercial relations between Venice and the Byzantine Empire, see Silvano Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio nel XII secolo: i rapporti economici* (Venice: Deputazione editrice, 1988), pp. 3ff.

his successors the title of 'Dux Dalmatiae'.[160] Control of the ports of the eastern Adriatic facilitated Venetian commercial dominance in the region, which included Bari.[161]

However, by recovering the body of St Nicholas, an internationally popular saint, Bari had acquired a powerful source of prestige. At the time of the 1087 translation, St Nicholas was also held in high esteem by the Venetian state and, as in Bari, the cult of St Nicholas in Venice predated the city's acquisition of his relics. As mentioned above, when the saint's body was brought to Venice, the monastery dedicated to St Nicholas on the Lido was already established, and the saint appeared prominently in the apse mosaics of S. Marco. It is plausible that the Venetian soldiers intended to steal the body because he was an important state saint. Whether the theft was indeed predetermined, or in fact opportunistic, being in close proximity to the mortal remains of a saint nevertheless ensured greater efficacy of their miraculous powers.[162] In possessing the body of St Nicholas, the prayers of the seafarers of Venice would have been considered all the more successful. The Venetian state needed a maritime saint, and the mosaic inscription in the apse of S. Marco suggests that St Nicholas had already been chosen for this role.

The Venetian acquisition of the relics of St Nicholas may have been an act of piety, the logical next step in nurturing a growing cult. The Venetian state had, however, demonstrated the function of relics as a means of competing with rivals when, in 829, Venetian merchants stole the body of St Mark from Alexandria. This act was supposedly to contend with the Republic's rivals,

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[160] See p. 2, fn. 10, above. Although the doge gained this title in the year 1000, it was not until 200 years later that Dubrovnik and other cities in Dalmatia became fully governed by Venice. After the fall of the Norman Empire in southern Italy, and the Venetian success in the Fourth Crusade, Venice took control of the weaker Dalmatian cities, and systematically captured towns along the eastern Adriatic coast between Dubrovnik and Trieste. Dubrovnik remained a Venetian dependency for 150 years until 1358, when the city passed under the protection of the Hungarian kings following the victory of King Ludovik of Hungary and Croatia over the Venetians in that year. For Venetian domain in Dalmatia and Istria, see Carter (1972), esp. pp. 84-129.

[161] For trade relations between Venice and Puglia, see Pantaleo Carabellese and Adelchi Zambler, eds, *Le relazioni commerciali fra la Puglia e la Republica di Venezia dal secolo X al XV* (Trani: Vecchi, 1898).

[162] According to tradition, a saint's power was most strongly manifest in their mortal remains. See Vauchez (1997), p. 432.

the cities of Constantinople, Milan, Aquileia and Ravenna, who all possessed relics of apostles.[163] The acquisition of relics was a means of extending and projecting Venetian commercial and territorial control.

This section has presented arguments based upon suggestive primary evidence and relevant comparisons; their culmination points to the conclusion that the Venetian acquisition of the relics of St Nicholas was a direct response to, an act of competition with, and an attempt to assert superiority over, the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari. Chapter Three has discussed the rivalry provoked by the shrine at Bari within southern Italy, in particular at Trani and Benevento, and within Bari itself. Venice demonstrates another example, but on a much greater scale.

PART TWO: ST NICHOLAS AND POPULAR DEVOTION IN VENICE

At the centre of Venetian civic and religious life, St Nicholas was understood and portrayed as a patron and protector of the Republic: a saint who could symbolise state ideology and represent civic pride. Was the cult of St Nicholas understood thus by the wider Venetian community? An examination of the popular manifestations of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice demonstrates that the saint could respond to more everyday needs, in addition to those assigned to him by the city's elite.

S. NICOLETTO DEI FRARI

The small convent and church of S. Nicoletto dei Frari was built in the mid-fourteenth century adjoining the large monastic complex of Sta Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, in the S. Polo district of

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[163] Demus (1960), pp. 5-7. The church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople was built with the aim of uniting the relics of the apostles, although only relics of St Andrew and the Evangelist Luke were actually kept there. The church of St Ambrose in Milan was the first apostle's church in northern Italy, and was the resting place of relics of Sts John, Andrew and Thomas, as well as of the Evangelists John and Luke, and St John the Baptist. Aquileia possessed relics of the Apostles John, Andrew and possibly Thomas, and the Evangelist Luke, and Ravenna owned relics of 6 apostles including Sts Andrew and Thomas, as well as Sts John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. Rivalry between Venice and Aquileia has been well-documented: Ravenna was also the ecclesiastical and political centre of Italy in the early Middle Ages. See Thomas S. Brown, 'The Church of Ravenna and the Imperial Administration in the Seventh Century', *EHR* 94, no. 307 (Jan. 1979), pp. 1-28.

Venice. S. Nicoletto dei Frari was a lay foundation, built by a *Procuratore* of S. Marco named Nicolò Lion. According to legend, the convent was built as an offering of thanks after Lion ate a lettuce from the Frari garden which cured him of a terrible stomach illness;[164] hence the monastery's popular name of 'S. Nicolai de la Latuga.'[165] Lion's last testament, dated 13 February 1353, details his desire that his sons should build a monastery dedicated to 'Beati Nicolai Confessoris,' and provides a *termine post quem* for the beginning of construction of the complex.[166] Unfortunately, the church of S. Nicoletto dei Frari was mostly destroyed in the eighteenth century, and its convent was incorporated into the state archives.[167] Nevertheless, the extensive documentation preserved in the state archives has enabled scholars to reconstruct the history of the convent, including its construction, development and internal decoration.[168]

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[164] The legend describes how one night Nicolò Lion, who suffered from a terrible stomach illness, wanted to eat a lettuce in order to ease his symptoms. However, because it was the middle of the night, he was only able to find a lettuce in the vegetable garden of the Frari convent. Once cured, Nicolò Lion built the small monastery of S. Nicoletto dei Frari as an offering of thanks to the friars. This legend is retold by Corner (1749), vol. 6, p. 308, and Sansovino (1604), p. 160a. See also Francesco Andreola, *Le chiese di Venezia. Descritte ed illustrate da Giambattista Soravia* (Venice: F. Andreola, 1822-24), vol. 2, p. 155. The *Procurator ecclesiae Sancti Marci* was a powerful political office in the Venetian state, indeed the highest rank after the doge, established in the early-12th century. The Procurator's responsibility was the financial administration of the church, as well as the overseeing of its building and decoration. Until the end of the 13th century the procurator was elected by the doge, and later by the Grand Council. In the 13th century the financial reach of the *procuratia di S. Marco* was such that it was the city's largest landlord and prime fiduciary institution. See Demus (1960), pp. 52-54; Pincus (2000), p. 11.

[165] A testament from 16 February 1495, mentions 'Fratribus et Monasterio S. Nicolai de la Latuga Ordinis S. Francisci situati in domo magna Fratrum Minorum de Venetiis'. See Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 1999. Corner also refers to 'De Monasterio Sancti Nicolai de Lactuca', Corner (1749), vol. 6, p. 308.

[166] The testament of Nicolò Lion (13 February 1353) is preserved in the state archives at Venice, in very good condition: 'It. volo et ordino q. ille locus meo nomine et filij mei dominici lion construet. In Loco Sancte Marie fratrum minorum de Venetiis ad honorem et reverentiam Dei omnipotentis et ortodoxe fidei incrementum et Beati Nicolai Confessoris sub cuius vocabulo disposui et volo dictum locum esse fundatum: et Sanctus Nicolaus p.petuo nuncupari si ad obitum meum non esset omnibus necessarijs libris cuiuscumq.' ASV, Convento S. Nicoletto della Lattuga, Corporazioni religiose soppresse, 20, Sta. M. Gloriosa dei Frari, b. 96, 1353-1785. The document is transcribed by Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, pp. 2019-21.

[167] For the closing of the convent of S. Nicoletto and the convent of Sta Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, see Isidoro Gatti, *S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari. Storia di una presenza francescana a Venezia* (Venice: Grafiche Veneziane, 1992), pp. 110-12. See also Juergen Schulz, 'Veronese's Ceiling at San Nicolò ai Frari', *BM* 103, no. 699 (1961), p. 241.

[168] See in particular Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2. Sartori's publication includes transcriptions of all documents relating to the convent of S. Nicoletto from the Venetian state archives. See also Corner (1749), vol. 6, pp. 308-12.

Building work had begun on the convent of S. Nicoletto by at least 1394,[169] and at the beginning of the fifteenth century glass windows were fitted in the church, either as part of the original construction or as a later restoration.[170] The church was restored and embellished in the sixteenth century,[171] and was re-consecrated on 17 August 1582, possibly after further restoration works.[172] The convent was devastated by fire in 1743,[173] and later suppressed on 27 September 1806.[174] In 1875, the restored convent was converted into the state archives.[175] The convent was located adjacent to the convent of Sta Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, at the end of the main cloister on the left-hand side.[176] The 1500 woodcut map of Venice by Jacopo de Barbari shows the façade of the church of S. Nicoletto in precisely the same position as the current entrance to the state archives (Figs 4.31, 4.32).[177] The testament of Nicolò Lion dictates that the convent should be home to twelve Franciscans, probably to be taken from the Frari convent.[178] It is probable therefore that the convent was conceived as an extension of the larger Frari convent, although

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[169] According to a document published by Sartori. ASV, Procurati di S. Marco de Ultra, Convento S. Nicoletto della Lattuga, processi, b. c, fasc. e, p. 3, as in Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2022.

[170] A document dated 1410 states that 'la chiesa e il convento erano in grande lavoro; si facevano le finestre di vetro'. ASV, Procurati di S. Marco de Ultra, Convento S. Nicoletto della Lattuga, b. 1, as in Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2001.

[171] A document dated 9 August 1561 describes how the *procuratia* donated 70 ducats for repair works to the convent of S. Nicoletto. ASV, Convento S. Nicoletto della Lattuga, b. 3, no. 150, as in Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2001.

[172] Corner (1749), vol. 6, p. 310: 'Templum hoc Divo Nicolao dicatum consecratum ... Anno millesimo cen. octuagesimo secundo. Die decima septima Augusti'. A document dated 18 January 1582 mentions a donation of 25 ducats to the convent of S. Nicoletto for necessary repair works: ASV, Convento S. Nicoletto della Lattuga, b. 2, no. 3, p. 17v, as in Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2022.

[173] Corner (1749), vol. 6, p. 312: 'Reliqua hujus Monasterii monumenta desiderantur fiquidem anno 1743. ex fortuito incendio intempesta nocte cohorto potior Monasterii pars conglagravit, quae tamen Divina favente clementia in pristinam formam restituta est.' See also Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2025.

[174] Padua, Convento del Santo, Archivio Provinciale, b. 5, no. 164, as in Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2060.

[175] Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2061.

[176] Sansovino (1604), p. 160.

[177] See Corrado Balistreri-Trincanato and Dario Zanverdiani, eds, *Jacopo de Barbari. Il racconto di una citta* (Venezia-Mestre: Cetid, 2000), p. 126.

[178] The testament also states that there should be 8 priests and 3 clerics: 'Item volo et ordino quod in dicto loco et monasterio beati Nicholai stare habitare et interesse debeant continue duodecim fratres minores ex quibus octo sint sacerdotes et tres clerici et unus conversus, qui omnes fratres omnibus diebus et horis congruis, et ordinatis debeant et teneantur.' Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2019. In the 17th century, Sansovino claimed that the numbers of brothers in the convent of the Frari did not exceed 100. See Sansovino (1604), p. 160b.

Nicolò Lion entrusted his convent to the protection of the *Procuratori di S. Marco d'Ultra*, thereby ensuring its independence from the Frari.[179]

The convent of S. Nicoletto is an example of personal devotion to St Nicholas on behalf of a lay citizen of Venice. The foundation was established as an offering of gratitude to the Frari convent, and was dedicated to the procurator's namesake, St Nicholas. In Venice, devotion to St Nicholas could be stimulated by factors unrelated to the saint's role as the patron of the state's fleet, indicating that the saint was understood to be responsive to diverse needs. The convent of S. Nicoletto received repeated benefaction, demonstrating the wide devotion to St Nicholas in the wealthy classes of Venice. During the centuries following the foundation of the church, testaments indicate that the convent was a popular choice as the recipient of posthumous patronage.[180] The monastery also owned land, which in 1495 included fourteen *campi*, seven of which were donated by a certain Francesco Valier.[181] The choice of S. Nicoletto for benefaction possibly reflects an understanding of the importance of St Nicholas to the Venetian state, as well as personal devotion. It may also be a result of the convent's location adjacent to the convent of Sta Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, a prestigious recipient for patronage as from the fifteenth century it became a ducal burial site.[182]

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[179] Coronelli (1700), p. 21. See also the 1353 foundation document: 'et hec omnia continue administrentur et adimpleantur perdictos meos Comissarios vel per predictum Dominicum Lion dilectum filium meum … Volo et Iubeo meos fideles Comissariosesse dominos procurators S. Marci super Comissariis de Ultra Canalem constitutos, secundum quot post mortem dictorum meorum Comissariorum per tempura fuerint', Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2019.

[180] For example, the 1446 testament of Nicolò Grioni instructs that 1 gold ducat should be given to the convent of S. Nicoletto in perpetuity: ASV, Procurati di S. Marco de Ultra, Ius Patronato di S. Nicolò della Lattuga, Processi A, no. 28; Convento S. Nicoletto della Lattuga, b. 1, no. 1, p. 4. Later, the 1570 testament of Vincenza Pigna dictates that 200 ducats should be left for the guardian of S. Nicoletto: ASV, Convento S. Nicoletto della Lattuga, b. 1, no. 1, p. 44. Both documents are transcribed by Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 1999.

[181] According to a testament dated 1495, written by the norary Daniele Irsono, 'Il convento di S. Nicoletto acquista 7 campi in Zeminiana e altri 7 in Villa di Sala da Francesco Valier', ASV, Convento S. Nicoletto della Lattuga, b. 1, no. 1, p. 11. A 1497 testament also states that a female patron named 'Pizzochera' wanted to leave land after her death to the convent of S. Nicoletto: ASV, Procurati di S. Marco de Ultra, Convento S. Nicoletto della Lattuga, b. 1. Both documents are taken from Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 1999.

[182] For example, Doges Francesco Foscari (d.1457) and Nicolò Tron (d.1473) were both buried in large monuments inside the church.

The generous benefaction of the convent of S. Nicoletto ensured that the church was well-endowed with magnificent works of art. While the recorded and surviving artworks from the convent are later than the period in discussion, their existence demonstrates the continuing importance of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice. The church had at least three altars by the end of the sixteenth century, dedicated to St Nicholas, St John the Baptist and the Pietà,[183] which at this time were embellished with paintings from such prestigious artists as Palma il Giovanne,[184] Paolo Veronese,[185] and Veronese's heirs, the Caliari.[186] The main altar famously displayed an altarpiece by Titian, noted by Corner, and now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana (Fig. 4.33).[187] Titian's altarpiece, dated c.1520-25, is inscribed 'TICIANUS FACIEBAT', and depicts the Virgin and Child in glory above St Nicholas and other Venetian state saints: Catherine, Peter, Anthony of Padua, Francis and Sebastian. It is not known what adorned the altar previously, although it is probable that an altarpiece displaying St Nicholas had always been present.

It is also not known who worshipped in the convent of S. Nicoletto. Certainly, the volume of artworks donated to the convent indicates it was popular with the wealthy sectors of Venetian society. The convent was a lay foundation, and was perhaps popular because it was not associated with state ritual. As an appendage to the Franciscan Frari, the convent could however also have responded to the devotional needs of supporters of the mendicant order, suggesting that the lower, poorer classes may have also worshipped there. The convent of S. Nicoletto was a strong

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[183] According to the 1581 Apostolic Visitation to Venice. See ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 96, Venice (19 Feb.-11 Aug. 1581), fol. 45r. A testament from 10 July 1584, recorded by Sartori, claims there to have been 5 altars, dedicated to St Nicholas, St Francis, St John the Baptist and the Pietà, as well as the high altar. Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2002.

[184] This was on the first altar to the left, according to Zanetti (1771), vol. 4, p. 307.

[185] According to Sartori, the *Guida della Reale Accademia di Belle Arti* of 1830 claimed that the Accademia was in possession of a painting of the Prophet Isiah by Paolo Veronese, which once belonged to S. Nicoletto dei Frari. See Sartori (1983-88), vol. 2.2, p. 2001. Veronese also painted a cycle for the ceiling of the church of S. Nicoletto, a fragment of which, showing St Nicholas's coronation as Bishop of Myra, is preserved in the Accademia gallery; see Schulz (1981), pp. 241-45. For other paintings in the church by Veronese, see Zanetti (1771), vol. 2, pp. 185-86.

[186] For details of a painting by Benedetto and Carletto Caliari, see Zanetti (1771), vol. 3, pp. 266, 268-69. Benedetto Caliari was the younger brother of Paolo Veronese; Carletto was Benedetto's son.

[187] 'Ecclesia nonnullis Divorum lipsanis decorata, atque eximiis Titiani aliorumque Clarissimorum Pictorum laboribus exornata a Marco Medice Clodiensi Episcopo anno 1582', Corner (1749), vol. 6, p. 310. For the altarpiece, see Humfrey (1993), p. 359.

exemplar of popular devotion to St Nicholas in Venice, and the link it created between the cult of St Nicholas and the Franciscan Order perhaps contributed to the continued popularity of the saint in Venice many centuries after the translation of his relics there.

THE ALTARPIECE REPRESENTATIONS

St Nicholas was a popular choice for altar dedications in Venice. A valuable resource for assessing altar dedications are the Apostolic Visitations, preserved in the Archivio Segreto at the Vatican. The Visitation to Venice, which occurred in 1581, provides a record of all altars, and many altarpieces, from the parish churches and monasteries in Venice.[188] Modern scholars, in particular Peter Humfrey and Silvio Tramontin, have used the Visitation to gather statistical information regarding altars, altarpieces and wider patterns of devotion within the city.[189] However, as a valuable resource the Venice Visitation remains under-exploited. Although the Visitation occurred after the Middle Ages, the document is pertinent because it constitutes the earliest and most comprehensive survey of altars and altarpieces from Venetian churches.

By the year 1581, St Nicholas was the sixth-most popular choice for altar dedications in Venice: at least nineteen altars were dedicated to him, compared to only nine to St Mark.[190] Furthermore, Humfrey's statistical analysis of surviving Venetian altarpieces, dated between 1450 and 1530,[191] has shown that St Nicholas was more commonly depicted than St Mark on Venetian altarpieces during this period: St Mark appeared on sixteen, St Nicholas on eighteen. Only Sts John the Baptist, Jerome, Peter and Sebastian appeared more frequently than St

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[188] ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 96, Venice (19 Feb.-11 Aug. 1581).

[189] See Humfrey (1993), and Silvio Tramontin, 'La Visita Apostolica del 1581 a Venezia', *Studi Veneziani* 9 (1967), pp. 453-533.

[190] St Nicholas follows the Virgin, Holy Sacrament, Holy Cross, St John the Baptist and St Jerome. St Mark was the joint-15th most popular choice for altar dedications: see table 3 in Humfrey (1993), p. 64. I found 19 altars dedicated to St Nicholas in the 1581 Visitation document, although Humfrey counted 22.5; both figures are, however, still much greater than the agreed number of altars dedicated to St Mark: 9. See Humfrey (1993), p. 64, table 4.

[191] The following statistics do not include altarpieces predating this period.

Nicholas.[192] These statistics are indicative of a strong cult following for St Nicholas in Venice, and suggest that perhaps this saint was more popular amongst the lay citizens of the city than the most important state saint, St Mark.

Surviving Venetian altarpieces generally date from the mid-fifteenth century. Only three are dated before this period, to the mid-fourteenth century, and include the two Paolo Veneziano predella panels discussed above (Figs 2.21, 4.16). The following section will discuss the third panel from this period, as well as a sample from the later fifteenth-century corpus, which provide an interesting insight into the function and interpretation of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice, and offer clues as to why this saint was particularly favoured.

The third mid-fourteenth-century example is another predella panel, of different provenance and now in the Hermitage at St Petersburg, which shows another scene from the life of St Nicholas: his rescue of a ship in a storm at sea (Fig. 4.34). Tatiana Kustodieva has attributed this panel to Lorenzo Veneziano. It is dated to the late 1360s, and is also thought to have originated from an altarpiece predella.[193] As discussed in Chapter Two, the miracle of St Nicholas rescuing mariners at sea was the second-most frequently depicted miracle of St Nicholas in Italian art, after the miracle of the Three Destitute Maidens, and would have been especially important for a Venetian audience. It is not known who the altarpiece was commissioned by, or where it was conceived for, but the iconography clearly reflects the role assigned to St Nicholas by the Venetian state: the protection of its citizens at sea. The panel shows the moment in which St Nicholas appears to a boat that is about to become shipwrecked by a storm, personified by small devils that agitate the boat's sail. The scene is one of chaos as the waves lift the boat with force while sailors frantically offload barrels into the sea. Amidst the turmoil, St Nicholas stands upright on the stern of the boat and calmly dispels the demons. The control demonstrated by St Nicholas shows that he was a worthy saint to call upon for protection while at sea.

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[192] For these statistics, see Humfrey (1993), p. 65, table 5.

[193] Tatiana Kustodieva, 'Due frammenti della pittura veneziana del Trecento', *Arte Veneta* 50 (1997), pp. 7-8. This panel is small, measuring 31.5 x 21.5 cm.

The predella panels by Paolo and Lorenzo Veneziano are the only representations of scenes from the life of St Nicholas which survive in Venetian art from before the sixteenth century.[194] As a group, the panels provoke speculation: do they follow an established Venetian artistic tradition, and are they indicative of other St Nicholas cycles that do not survive, either contemporary or earlier? In particular, because of St Nicholas's role as the protector of the Venetian fleet, it is likely that other panels representing the saint at sea were produced, perhaps iconographically similar to the Hermitage panel. It is possible that these panels also provide clues about lost artworks relating to the cult of St Nicholas elsewhere in Venice, for example the decoration of the first church of S. Nicolò di Lido, and the original high altarpiece in the church of S. Nicoletto dei Frari.

The later, fifteenth-century altarpieces depicting St Nicholas represent the saint as a standing figure, usually in the company of other saints. These later altarpieces are important for this chapter because they display iconographical changes in the figure of St Nicholas which reflect developments witnessed elsewhere in Italy, as discussed in Chapter Two.

St Nicholas is represented as a single, standing figure in a panel now at the Seminario Patriarcale in Venice, painted in 1450-51 by Antonio Vivarini (Fig. 2.15).[195] The oval panel, which has lost its frame, was originally part of a large group of figures constituting a wide altarpiece of standing saints. In this panel, St Nicholas turns to his right towards the central panel representing the Virgin and Child, indicating his position on the right-hand side of the complete composition. The corresponding panel to the left of the centre, also at the Seminario Patriarcale, represents an unknown bishop saint and the thirteenth-century Franciscan saint, Louis of Toulouse, suggesting that the altarpiece was commissioned for a Franciscan church.[196]

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[194] St Nicholas cycles are more common in the Veneto region outside Venice, for example the Vitale da Bologna fresco cycle, dated 1349, at the cathedral of Udine, and the frescoes by the Master of Sta Felicita in the church of S. Zeno, Verona. See Chapter 2 for St Nicholas cycles in north-east Italy.

[195] For the panel, see Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 336-37.

[196] Ibid., p. 336.

The Vivarini painted many images of St Nicholas, which all display very similar characteristics. For example, on the Bari altarpiece mentioned in Chapter Three, painted by Bartolomeo Vivarini in 1476 (Fig. 3.21), St Nicholas has the same tight, curly hair and large, bald forehead as the saint represented by Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini on the 1450 Certosa polyptych (Fig. 4.35).[197] In each case, St Nicholas is also represented as a western bishop. In the Seminario Patriarcale panel, St Nicholas wears a large, gilded and bejewelled mitre, and upon his left shoulder rests a large crosier whose ornate carving and gilding give the object considerable weight. The saint's cope contains depictions of the Virgin and Child and two prophets, and further figures can be distinguished on the cuff of an undergarment. Importantly, balanced upon a closed book in the saint's right hand are three large, golden spheres, the attribute which in the later Middle Ages became St Nicholas's most frequently depicted.

The Bartolomeo Vivarini altarpiece, commissioned for the church of S. Nicola at Bari by a Venetian resident of the town, is very revealing as a work painted in Venice, for Bari (Fig. 3.21). It is not known when this altarpiece arrived in Bari, although it was certainly in the church before the year 1602, when it was mentioned in the visitation account of one Fabio Grisone.[198] The main panel of the altarpiece represents a central enthroned Virgin and Child flanked by four saints. To the left are Sts Louis of Toulouse and James Major,[199] and to the right is St Nicholas and a fourth saint identified as either St Mark, St Peter or St Bartholomew.[200] I would suggest that this fourth saint is St Mark. All the saints represented on this altarpiece are clearly identified by an attribute. The figure next to St Nicholas does not hold the flaying knife that is usually associated with St Bartholomew, or the keys that are the attribute of St Peter, but an open book, most likely referring to the Gospel written by St Mark. The presence of the most important

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[197] For the altarpiece in the church of S. Nicola, Bari, see Bacci, ed. (2006), pp. 265-66. For the Certosa polyptych, painted for the high altar of the Carthusian monastic church of S. Gerolamo alle Certosa, near Bologna, see Humfrey (1993), pp. 163-64.

[198] See Bacci (2006), p. 265.

[199] The figure of St James Major has also been identified as St Roch; see Bacci (2006), p. 265. I would argue that this saint is St James Major, because his pilgrim's staff displays a scallop shell, the symbol of the saint's shrine at Santiago di Compostela.

[200] Bacci (2006), p. 265.

Venetian state saint on an altarpiece sent to Bari is suggestive. The representation of St Mark occupying the dominant position in the composition, partly obscuring the figure of St Nicholas, could be interpreted as an expression of the donor's civic pride. Additionally, the representation of these two saints side by side could reflect both their roles as state saints, emphasising that they were favoured by the Republic. In the context of civil rivalry concerning the shrines of St Nicholas at Venice and Bari, the arrangement of the saints in this altarpiece can be interpreted as a statement of confidence in the legitimacy of the relics of St Nicholas preserved on the Lido, and therefore a subtle indication of the superiority of the saint's shrine at Venice.

The Seminario Patriarcale panel is the earliest surviving example of St Nicholas dressed as a western bishop in Venetian art (Fig. 2.15). Earlier images, for example those in the church of S. Marco and the Lorenzo Veneziano predella panel, display St Nicholas as an orthodox, or 'hybrid' saint. Later altarpieces continue to represent St Nicholas as a western bishop, for example in the 1488 triptych by Giovanni Bellini commissioned by the Pesaro family, patrons of the sacristy of the convent of Sta Maria Gloriosa dei Frari where the altarpiece remains today (Fig. 2.18, 4.36).[201] This work represents the Virgin and Child in the central panel, Sts Nicholas and Peter on the left wing, and Sts Mark and Benedict on the right. Here, a western St Nicholas balances a book flat upon his hand as if in anticipation of the three golden spheres, which are however absent. The architectural setting of the scene, which resembles a church sanctuary, draws the figures together in an intimate space, and Sts Nicholas, Peter and Mark are united through the direction of their gaze and similar solemn expressions. These three saints are namesaints of members of the Pesaro family; they also create a group of important state saints which recalls the mosaic programme of the apse of the church of S. Marco. St Nicholas is again visually integrated with other patron saints of Venice, but this time as a western bishop saint,

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[201] For the commissioning, dating and iconography of the altarpiece, see Mauro Lucco, 'Venezia', in *La pittura nel Veneto: Il Quattrocento*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan: Electa, 1989), vol. 2, pp. 458-59; Humfrey (1993), p. 348.

showing that his new Latinised image, perpetuated throughout Italy after the mid-thirteenth century, also became assimilated into the Venetian artistic tradition.

The full integration of the western St Nicholas image is demonstrated on an altarpiece by Giambattista Cima da Conegliano, painted c.1499-1501 for the Venetian church of Sta Maria della Carità. This work is known as the Dragan altarpiece, after its patron Giorgio Dragan (Fig. 4.37).[202] Here, an enthroned Virgin and Child are flanked to the left by Sts Catherine, George and Nicholas, and to the right by Sts Anthony Abbot, Sebastian and Lucy. Each saint is recognisable by their attribute rather than an inscription, and St Nicholas again displays his three golden spheres. The absence of inscriptions indicates that by the end of the fifteenth century the image of St Nicholas as a Latin bishop was recognised in Venice, and that the three golden spheres were an established element of his iconography. The figure of St Nicholas is remarkably similar to an earlier figure of the saint painted by Cima da Conegliano, on the 1492-93 altarpiece in the duomo at Conegliano (Fig. 4.38).[203] This painter, as well as the Vivarini, would have been influential in establishing consistency within the iconography of St Nicholas in Venetian art.

St Nicholas was chosen for the Dragan altarpiece for a specific reason. The group of saints, united within the intimate space of the *sacra conversazione*, are Venetian state saints. Peter Humfrey has noted that the choice of saints reflects the concerns of the donor, Giorgio Dragan, who was a high-ranking officer in the Venetian navy. The identity of the saints indicate Dragan's need for protection against many kinds of danger, including shipwrecks, battles and diseases.[204] St George, a warrior saint, was also the patron's namesaint, and St Nicholas was likely to have been chosen because he was the patron of the city's fleet. This altarpiece suggests that St Nicholas remained important for this role, even though in his new Latin guise his charity was emphasised through the attribute of the three golden spheres.

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[202] For the Dragan altarpiece, see Humfrey (1993), pp. 71-72.

[203] For the Conegliano altarpiece, see Humfrey (1993), pp. 211-12.

[204] Humfrey (1993), p. 72.

In the Venetian altarpieces, the figure of St Nicholas underwent the same transformation as seen elsewhere in Italy: his episcopal clothing changed from orthodox to Latin, and he acquired an attribute. It is not known at what point this change occurred, and whether it corresponded with the saint's image elsewhere in Italy, as so few panels survive from before the mid-fifteenth century. The reasons for the development in the Venetian iconography of St Nicholas are likely to reflect those elsewhere in Italy, in particular the need to have a patron saint who resembled more closely the Latin bishops of the Republic and not those of a distant land. The desire to update the image of the saint to reflect the new location of his relics was also influential. In this respect, the development of the iconography of St Nicholas could be interpreted as an expression of Venetian civic pride following the celebrated arrival of the saint's body. Also, the shedding of the saint's orthodox garments could indicate the loss of prestige held by the Venetian Republic for the Byzantine Empire following the Fourth Crusade. Furthermore, the later altarpieces indicate that although the image of the saint could be adapted, his efficacy as the patron of the city's fleet was not compromised.

The transition from eastern to western bishop was not, however, complete in Venetian art, as the image of St Nicholas in the church of S. Marco remained eastern even in the fourteenth century, when elsewhere in Italy the saint's figure was fully Latinised. This perhaps suggests that here St Nicholas was assigned a very specific role associated with the doge and the church of S. Marco: one of victory over the Republic's eastern rivals. In Venice, St Nicholas had two images: one promoted by the state, another which developed according to popular devotion and in accordance with the saint's image elsewhere in Italy. The iconography of St Nicholas in Venetian art therefore followed a different path to the saint's iconography in Puglia and the rest of Italy, and reflects the various forces that could affect a saint's cult: popular devotion, artistic practices, and the interests of the state.

NOTARIAL DOCUMENTS

Besides the benefaction of churches and altarpieces, devotion to particular saints can be traced through records of vicarious pilgrimage. As discussed in Chapter Three, vicarious pilgrimage, requested posthumously through testaments, is a category of pilgrimage that is documented by a considerable volume of evidence.[205] While the testaments of the Venetian laity can provide only a general impression of pilgrimage trends for the city's population, they are nevertheless very revealing for a study of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice.

Following the precedent of Giampaolo Cagnin for the state archives at Treviso, I have conducted a preliminary survey of Venetian testaments from the state archives at Venice. In his recent publication, *Pellegrini e vie del pellegrinaggio a Treviso nel medioveo*, Cagnin presents a comprehensive analysis of vicarious pilgrimage from north-east Italy based upon notarial evidence from the state archives at Treviso, dated between c.1390 and 1450.[206] A comparable analysis of the material preserved in the Venetian state archives would be too extensive for this thesis; nevertheless, the examination of a sample of testaments has proved worthwhile and indicative of general pilgrimage trends. From a study of 250 testaments from the *busta* of Bossi de Girolamo, dated between 1486 and 1524, seventy-three testators expressed the desire to leave money for vicarious pilgrimages, some to more than one location.[207] Of these pilgrimages, fifty-two were to Rome, thirty-one to Assisi, and one to Santiago, while two destinations were unclear.

As discussed in Chapter Three, notarial testaments can be a problematic source for extracting historical information, as they contain very specific elements of data. However, the testaments do provide an accessible means for assessing which shrines were favoured or ignored by the Venetian laity. While Rome and Assisi were popular, the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari was

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[205] See Sensi (1992).

[206] Cagnin (2000), esp. p. 11.

[207] ASV, Archivio Notarile, Bossi de Girolamo (1486-1524), Testamenti 50, ff. 1v-219v. I have studied other *buste*, including: Bartolomio de St Bartolomio (1333-37), Testamenti 592; Francesco Galvani (1381-1403), Testamenti 556; Malombra de Tomaso (1386-1403), Testamenti 731. However, only the *busta* of Bossi de Girolamo contained references to vicarious pilgrimage.

not mentioned once. Arguing *ex silentio*, the lack of positive evidence regarding pilgrimage to Bari suggests that the shrine of St Nicholas there was not an important pilgrimage destination for the Venetian laity. Cagnin's study of the testaments from the state archives at Treviso reveals a similar conclusion: pilgrims from north-east Italy, both penitentiary and vicarious, most commonly visited, or were requested to visit, the holy sites of Rome, Santiago, Jerusalem and Assisi.[208] Only one testament published by Cagnin mentions a Puglian shrine, that of Monte S. Angelo.[209] This is a contrast to the results of the study of vicarious pilgrimage from Umbria undertaken by Mario Sensi, discussed in Chapter Three, which revealed that the Puglian shrine of Monte S. Angelo, and the *Iter Magnum* which later included Bari, were more popular than the shrines at Rome or Santiago.[210]

These studies suggest that pilgrimage to southern Italy did not hold the same appeal for Venetians as it did for communities in central Italy. The absence of Puglia from the choice of shrines was probably a result of practical considerations. Chapter Three has argued that a major motive for pilgrims to visit the shrine of S. Nicola at Bari was its position as a port on a major pilgrimage route to the Holy Land. Venice, too, was an important port for travellers journeying east. This chapter has mentioned some accounts of pilgrims passing through Venice to and from the Holy Land, including the German Dominican friar Felix Fabri in 1483, and the Milanese Canon Pietro Casola in 1494.[211] From Venice, pilgrims could travel south along the more sheltered eastern Adriatic coast to Greece and the Levant, a journey undertaken in 1323 by Symon Simeonis.[212]

The lack of evidence regarding the shrines of St Nicholas at Bari (and Puglia in general) in the notarial testaments of Venice and Treviso may reflect the fact that north-eastern travellers

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[208] Cagnin (2000), pp. 96-97, 125-26.

[209] The testament of Gerardino da Camposampiero, dated 8 July 1184, mentions 'Agneli', i.e. Monte S. Angelo: 'Dominus Gerardinus de Campo Sancti Petri, limina Sancti Petri e Pauli et Agneli visitare volens, tale testamentum de rebus suis condidt.' See Cagnin (2000), p. 187. Cagnin's source is Giambattista Verci, *Codice diplomatico eceliniano* (Bassano: Remondini, 1779), pp. 101-05, no. 53.

[210] Sensi (1992). See p. 153, fn. 108, above.

[211] See p. 227, fn. 128, 129, above.

[212] See Symon Simeonis (1960), esp. the map on the cover page.

did not rely upon the Puglian ports for access to the Holy Land. Nevertheless, the absence of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari does give further support to the argument raised earlier in this chapter, that the authenticity of the shrine at Bari was denied by the citizens of Venice. If the Venetians believed they possessed the true body of St Nicholas, they did not need to visit the shrine of the saint at Bari. Furthermore, this shrine must necessarily be founded upon a false acquisition, if the theory of the legitimacy of the relics of St Nicholas at Venice is to be upheld.

An earlier notarial document provides another indication of the spread of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice. A manifesto by the notary Felice de Marlis, dated 29 March 1317, mentions a ship called ‘Sanctus Nicolaus’.[213] In fact, Benjamin Kedar’s study of Genoese and Venetian merchants has revealed that St Nicholas was one of the most popular dedications for ships in Venice. Of ninety-two named ships recorded between 1193 and 1413 in Venice, St Nicholas was the second-most frequent name given to a ship after the Virgin.[214] These names indicate that St Nicholas was the saint most frequently associated with Venetian mercantile activity: St Nicholas was not just promoted as the patron of Venetian seafarers by the apse inscription in S. Marco, he was actually associated with this role by the wider population.

PART THREE: S. NICOLÒ DEI MENDICOLI

Both the ideological and popular aspects of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice are present in the unique parish church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli (Figs 4.39, 4.40). Located in the Dorsoduro district of Venice, the dedication of the church is a reflection of the area in which it was built, a

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[213] 29 March 1317: ‘Manifestum facio ego Thomas de la Beia burgesius Veneciarum in Ayacio … qui quidem denarii vadunt ad risicum et fortunam navis de ca’ Basadona vocate Sanctus Nicolaus que nunc de portu de Palis ed Aiacio’, Andreina Bondi Sebellico, ed., *Felics de Merlis: prete e notaio in Venezia ed Ayas (1315-1348)* (Venice: Il Comitato, 1973-78), p. 53.

[214] Of 92 named ships, 11 were named after the Virgin, 8 after St Nicholas, 5 after Sts Mark and Anthony, and 4 after St George. See Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis: Genoese and Venetian Men of Affairs and the Fourteenth-Century Depression* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 156-60.

poor neighbourhood mostly inhabited by fishermen and craftsmen, the 'Nicolotti Pescatori'.[215] This region contained no palaces, guilds or *scuole*, yet its community was united and structured, with the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli as the religious and civic centre. The church was named for these poor inhabitants, *dei mendicoli*, or 'of the beggars'; yet despite these links to the lower classes the community of the *Nicolotti* participated in the state festival of the *Sensa*, in a ritual that imitated the actions of the doge. S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli had a unique role within Venetian society, and could be considered to offer an inversion of the cult of St Nicholas promoted by the Venetian state, and even of the cult of St Mark.

The church that stands today is the result of many phases of rebuilding and restoration.[216] The earliest church on this site is thought to date from around the year 600,[217] although the earliest mention of the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli is an official document recording two fires, in 1106 and 1149, which damaged the church and many others.[218] Around the year 1160, the original Greek church was rebuilt with a Latin, basilical plan,[219] and a further building phase came in the second half of the fourteenth century when new columns were erected in the nave. Further restoration occurred in 1461,[220] and at the end of the sixteenth century the interior space was altered and embellished with paintings and gilding.[221]

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[215] The most thorough source for the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, and the *Nicolotti*, is the chronicle of the 17th-century priest of the church, Francesco Braccolani. Braccolani mentions: 'questa isola oggi detta di S. Nicolò de Mendicoli, o vero Nicolotti Pescatori', in *Breve notitia della fondatione dell'isola di S. Nicolò detto de Mendicoli* (Venice: P.A. Zamboni and A. Zatta, 1664), p. 14. For the fishermen of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, see also Bartolomeo Cecchetti, *La Vita dei Veneziani nel 1300*, part 2 (Venice: Fratelli Visentini, 1885), pp. 85-97.

[216] Excavations during recent restoration work revealed complex structures in the subsoil of the church, between which a thick wall of Istrian stone runs transverse across the nave, beneath the *iconostasis*. See Concina (1995), p. 162.

[217] See Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna, *Corpus delle iscrizioni di Venezia e delle isole della laguna Veneta* (Venice: Bibl. Orafa di S. Antonio Abate in S. Giovanni Evangelista, 2001), vol. 2, p. 1367.

[218] The 5 April 1105 and 1149 fires were recorded in the 1181 *Annales Venetici Breves*, which lists 25 parish churches hit by the fires. See Andrea Gallo, *Chiesa di San Nicolò dei Mendicoli: arte e devozione* (Venice: Marsilio, 1995), p. 10.

[219] Gallo (1995), p. 17. For dates of the rebuilding and restoration works of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, see Concina (1995), pp. 162-67. Concina takes information from Sansovino and other antiquarian sources.

[220] Concina suggests that at this time the side apsidal chapels were enlarged, after the church reclaimed a neighbouring strip of swampy ground. See Concina (1995), p. 167.

[221] Between 1592-95 the interior of the church was embellished. The 14th-century arcades were covered with gilding and polychrome carving, and wooden statues of the Apostles were placed above the columns.

Although the church has been considerably altered over the centuries, aspects of the medieval monument can still be determined. For example, the structure of the church today remains essentially the monument of the twelfth century, consisting of a central nave and two narrower side aisles, a transept, a semicircular apse and two side chapels, and a large, square tower built at the end of the twelfth century.[222] Likewise, although the interior of the church displays considerable sixteenth-century additions, architectural and decorative traces from the eleventh and fourteenth centuries are still visible. The apse has a twelfth-century Byzantine cornice,[223] and beneath whitewash in a room adjacent to the church, behind the north apsidal area, a late-Trecento fresco of the *Crucifixion* was rediscovered in the 1970s (Fig. 4.41).[224] Traces of soot and wax on the wall indicate that an altar was once located in front of the fresco, and parts of other scenes survive, including one of the Virgin to the right of the *Crucifixion*.[225]

More significantly for this thesis are the surviving thirteenth- and fourteenth-century sculptures in the church. On the west façade of the church above the portal, a worn stone relief represents St Nicholas enthroned, wearing a bishop's cope and mitre, and seated with what could be a closed book upon his lap (Fig. 4.42). Resting upon the book, and tilted towards the viewer several feet below, are the three golden spheres. Other figures are present: kneeling either side of St Nicholas and shielded by his cope are two possible representations of donors, and either side of the saint's head are two angels. Above St Nicholas is a triangular portico probably representing

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The ceiling was also gilded and decorated with paintings from notable artists of the time, including Jacopo Palma il Giovane and Carletto Caliari, showing Christological scenes and stories from the life of St Nicholas. At the end of the 16th century the *cappella maggiore* received a new pavement, and as a result of the 1581 Apostolic Visitation the interior liturgical space was altered. In particular, the *iconostasis* screen was removed and the positions of the choir, altars and baptismal font were changed (although Concina does not indicate how). A new *iconostasis* screen was built, consisting of 3 arches with Ionic columns which do not obstruct the view of the Sanctuary and can still be seen today. See Concina (1995), p. 167. For the Apostolic Visitation to S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, see ASVat, Visita Apostolica, AP 96, Venice (19 Feb.-11 Aug. 1581), ff. 280r-82r.

[222] Lorenzetti (1985), p. 560. The campanile has lost its steeple.

[223] Gallo (1995), p. 17; Lorenzetti (1985), p. 560.

[224] For the discovery and restoration of the Trecento fresco, see Giuseppina Fazio, 'Il restauro della 'Crocifissione' di S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli', <u>QSV</u> 7 (1978), pp. 79-83. See also Ettore Merkel, 'I maestri della 'Crocifissione' della chiesa di S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli', <u>QSV</u> 7 (Venice: 1978), pp. 77-78, and Concina (1995), p. 167.

[225] Merkel (1978), pp. 77-78.

Christ, holding both arms in blessing and flanked by either angels or winged lions. This relief has not been published or even dated; however, based upon the flattened drapery of the figures and the presence of the three golden spheres, the relief should probably be dated at the earliest to the second half of the thirteenth century.[226]

A capital inside the church, located on the second column from the altar on the north side of the nave, is dated by inscription to the year 1361 and displays a sculpted relief representing St Nicholas and St Nicetus, whose remains are kept in the church (Fig. 4.43).[227] On the relief St Nicholas stands full-length, again wearing a mitre and cope. His right hand is raised while in his left hand is a crosier which dominates the upper section of the scene, emphasising the saint's role as a bishop. Next to St Nicholas, St Nicetus is smaller and holds a martyr's palm in his right hand while blessing with his left. The unusual choice of the left hand for performing the benediction was probably a desire to create compositional balance in the relief. The two figures were created as a unified scene: they mirror one another's stance as they both turn towards the centre, and both look upwards out of the scene: St Nicholas towards the high altar, St Nicetus towards the main entrance. Both figures are gilded and painted in reds, pinks and yellows (which may be later additions). Despite the compositional balance, the two figures are carefully distinguished, with St Nicholas wearing a beard in contrast to the young face of St Nicetus. The difference in size between the two saints could be to bestow St Nicholas greater honour as the patron of the church. An inscription running along the top of the capital gives the 1361 date of its erection.[228]

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[226] This assessment is based upon the developments in the iconography of St Nicholas discussed in Chapter 2, which see the figure of St Nicholas acquire the attribute of the 3 golden spheres in the mid-13th century.

[227] The relics of St Nicetus were part of the booty from Constantinople brought to Venice after the Fourth Crusade. See Demus (1960), p. 17, fn. 60.

[228] Above the sculpted relief is an inscription that reads: MCCCLXI·DI·XXV·DE·VENER·FU·FATA ·QUESTA·CHOLONA·IN·TEMPO·DE·SER·ZANE·LAMBARDO·GASTALDO·DELA·SCUOLA·DE·S-ER·NICHOLO·E·DI·SUO·COMPAGNI. See Gallo (1995), p. 17.

A further sculpture representing St Nicholas is located in the main apse, behind the altar (Fig. 4.44). Here, a large wooden statue represents a seated St Nicholas, who raises his right arm in blessing and holds a crosier in his left hand. Prominently displayed on his lap are the three golden spheres, and again the saint is presented as a western bishop. The figure is almost entirely gilded, with blue detail on the cope. This statue is attributed by Lorenzetti to the workshop of Bartolomeo Bon, Venice's leading architect and sculptor in the early-fifteenth century.[229] The facial characteristics of the St Nicholas statue certainly share features of Bon's figures, including the elegant long, thin nose and gracefully arching eyebrows.[230]

This statue is particularly interesting because it is carved from wood, rather than stone or marble.[231] If it is the work of the fifteenth-century Bon workshop, the statue would have been added to the church following a period of internal rebuilding which included the addition of the carved capital in the nave, and before the sixteenth-century embellishment. It therefore seems unlikely that wood was chosen because of the comparatively higher costs of stone or marble, or indeed out of consideration to the church's dedication to St Nicholas 'of the beggars'. Rather, the choice of material is a result of the intended function of the statue. Wood, which is much lighter than stone, indicates that the statue may have had a processional use. This argument may explain the damage sustained by the statue, in particular to the saint's raised finger which has been reattached, and to the raised arm, whose awkward position suggests it is a replacement. This damage is more likely to have occurred to a statue that was handled, rather than to one that remained immobile in its niche.

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[229] See Giulio Lorenzetti, *Venezia e il suo estuario: guide storico-artistica* (Rome: Istituto poligrafico dello Stato, Libreria dello Stato, 1956), p. 548. For the work of Bartolomeo Bon and his role in Venetian art, see Anne Markham-Schulz, 'The Sculpture of Giovanni and Bartolomeo Bon and Their Workshop', *TAPS* 68, no. 3, new series (1978), pp. 1-81.

[230] See, for example, the statue of the *Virgin Annunciate* at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. See Markham-Schulz (1978), p. 58. Similarities between the wooden St Nicholas and a Venetian stone statue of the Virgin by a 'Nicholaus Vincitinus' have also been noted: see Wolfgang Wolters, *La scultura veneziana gotica (1300-1460)* (Venice: Alfieri Edizioni d'Arte, 1976), vol. 1, p. 275. Unfortunately I was unable to gain access behind the high altar in order to measure the statue or closely examine the sculpture, which is positioned above head height.

[231] This is perhaps why the statue is rarely mentioned, and only briefly so in Wolters (1976), pp. 153, 275.

The suggestion of a processional statue is supported by the unique role played by the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli within the local community. The church was both the religious and civic centre for the *Nicolotti*, a community of fishermen who famously opposed the Arsenal *Castellani* faction from Castello.[232] The *Nicolotti* had a leader, the 'Gastaldo Grande', elected by the inhabitants of the parish in the presence of representatives of the state.[233] The ceremony of election, which dates back to at least the mid-fourteenth century, took place in the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli:[234] the *gastaldo* would kneel before the high altar and offer an oath of loyalty to the parish priest and the state; he was then entrusted with the standard of the *Nicolotti*, a banner displaying the image of St Nicholas, before the ceremony closed with the singing of *Te Deum*.[235]

The following day the newly-elected *gastaldo* would process through the city, from the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli to the Piazza S. Marco, in the company of the *Nicolotti*, wearing the clothes of a doge and carrying the standard of St Nicholas.[236] At the ducal palace, the

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[232] Michelangelo Muraro, *A New Guide to Venice and Her Islands* (Florence: Arnaud, 1956), p. 344; Lorenzetti (1985), p. 559. Coronelli mentions 'La Guerra de Pugni trà Niccolotti, e Castellani', in Vincenzo Maria Coronelli, *Guida de'forestieri sacro-profana per osservare il più ragguardevole nella Città di Venezia, con la di lei pianta per passeggiarla in gondola, e per terra* (Venice: [unknown], 1700), p. 32. See also Zanotto (1842-61), vol. 3, pp. 2, 7, fn. 7.

[233] Braccolani mentions: 'Viene il Gastaldo Grande e Governatore de popoli Nicolotti Pescadori, in questa forma eletto', and 'Il sig. Secretario, accomdagnato da due Coadiutori, giovani pella cancellaria Ducale entrando questi in Chiesa di S. Nicolò, doppo fatto le solite orationi, si vanno à ponere nel mezzo de dodeci Precedenti, i quali il giorno innanzi di questa elettione, rengono à questo solo effetto eletti; secondo poscia sopra a Signor Secretario, il molto reverendo Signot Piovano di quella Chiesa, a cui dal Signor Secretario, viene dato il luogo', Braccolani (1664), pp. 18-19.

[234] See p. 256, fn. 236, below.

[235] 'lo eletto, il quale subito dalli più vecchi viene levato di sagrestia, & condotto, all'Altare Maggiore, dove è atteso dal signor secretario, e gionto avanti il Santissimo Sacramento, postosi in ginocchioni avanti del mederlo, presta à Dio, & al Signor Secretario il giuramento de fedeltà dicendo Noi N. Dei gratia Gastaldo Grande di S. Nicolò & S. Raffaele, giuro sopra di questo Altare, & sopra "Haec sacra Dei Evangelica", & nelle vostre manni, "hanc ministrationem sive fraude, & e bona fide confermere"'; 'il Sig. Secretario, piglia lo stendardo spiegato, & improntato con la figura di S. Nicolò Vescovo di Mirea loro Protettore, & porgendolo al sudetto Gastaldo Grande, Dice queste parole: 'Congifuriamus Vexillum Sancti Nicolai in nome del Serenissimo Prencipe, et Serenissima Signoria, in segno, che voi sete Capo Gastaldo, & Principale rel Popolo di S. Nicolò'; 'viene detto il Te Deum laudamus', Braccolani (1664), p. 24.

[236] 'l'elettione del Gastaldo Grande, il giorno seguente ... fatta li 7 ottobre 1360. Imperante Zuane Dolfino Prencipe ... esce di cosa vestito cou habiti di sotto, calzette, scarpe & veste Ducale col collaro aperto, tutte di color rosso, come appunto veste il cavaliero di sua serenità, & accompagnato dalli dodeci precedenti, e da Parenti, se ne va alla Chiesa di S. Nicolò ... Fuori della Chiesa lo sta attendendo un suo Alfiére, il quale và avanti tutti, portendo spiegato lo stendardo con l'imagine di S. Nicolò, consegnato il giorno antecedente

gastaldo was received by the doge with whom he exchanged a fraternal embrace.[237] The *gastaldo* was apparently considered a distinguished guest as he was allowed to kiss the hand of the doge, without its glove.[238] This meeting reflects the fact that the authority of the *gastaldo* was transferred by the doge, and that the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli was given as the seat of his leadership in the year 1200.[239] A further procession occurred on the feast day of St Nicholas, when the *gastaldo* would process to the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli where a mass would be performed and attended by the whole community.[240] I would suggest that the wooden statue of St Nicholas situated behind the high altar of the church was part of these processions.

The *gastaldo* was a clear figure of authority for the *Nicolotti*, and in many ways his role and actions mirrored those of the doge, giving him the reputation as the *Doge de'Nicolotti*.[241] The *gastaldo* was still subject to the doge, however, and was obliged to pay annual tributes at Easter and Pentecost.[242] The *gastaldo*'s responsibilities included defending and maintaining the independence of the *Nicolotti*; more significantly, the *gastaldo* also participated in the festival of the *Sensa*.[243] The chronicle of Braccolani, and a manuscript concerning the *Nicolotti* published by David Levi Morenos, give invaluable information about the role of the *gastaldo* on this day.[244] On

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per nome publico, per mano del signor Secretario al Gastaldo Grande; dietro allo stendardo seguono alcuni contamburi, e trombe, i quale suonando l'accompagnano sino in colegio: indinere appresso una gran moltitudino di Nicolotti pescadori e amici, che lu ... và passando per il ponte di Rialto fini al Palazzo di S. Marco.' Braccolani (1664), pp. 25-26.

[237] 'A queste parole, avicinandosi il sudetto Gastaldo Grande, al prencipe, viene questo medeno abbracciato, & rincadevolmente baciato', Braccolani (1664), p. 28. See also Lorenzetti (1985), p. 559.

[238] See A. Battagia, ed., *Cerimoniale solenne nel giorno dell'Ascensione per lo sposalizio del mare, tratto dall'ultimo codice inedito che serviva di norma all'ultimo cavaliere del doge* (Venice: [unknown], 1859), as in Padoan, pp. 35, 51, fn. 12.

[239] da Mosto (1960), p. xlvi; Lorenzetti (1985), p. 559.

[240] David Levi Morenos, *Descrizione della Mariegola di S. Nicolò de'Mendicoli in Venezia ossia statuto dell'arte dei Pescatori* (Vicenza: Fabris, 1898), p. 52.

[241] Coronelli (1690), p. 16; Lorenzetti (1985), p. 559.

[242] Morenos (1898), p. 45. See also Braccolani (1664), p. 35.

[243] 'Il Gastaldo Grande de Nicolanti pescatori, per autorità a se commessa dal senata difende, & mantienire, con ogni maggiore canta l'immunità delle pescagioni & de suoi popoli ... questo Gastaldo Grande, di accompagnare per loro antiche consuetudine il Serenissimo Prencipe, & Serenissima Signoria il giorno, che vanno a sposare il mare, quale il giorno della Ascensione di Nostro Signore al Cielo, il che si pratica ogni Anno nella seguente maniera', Braccolani (1664), pp. 32, 37.

[244] Braccolani (1664); Levi Morenos (1898). Levi Morenos's publication discusses a 17th-century manuscript in the Biblioteca Marciana, apparently presented by a bishop of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli,

the morning of the festival, the *gastaldo* would take his boat, in the company of the *Nicolotti* and amidst much pomp, to the 'Canale di S. Nicolò',[245] where his boat would join that of the doge, the *Bucintoro*. The *gastaldo* would accompany the doge first to S. Nicolò di Lido, and then back to Piazza S. Marco.[246] The *gastaldo*'s boat, much like the *Bucintoro*, was highly decorated and carried the St Nicholas standard given to the *gastaldo* at his election.[247]

The *gastaldo*'s participation in the *Sensa* festival, and the processions of the *Nicolotti* through the city of Venice, give an additional dimension to the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli: that of display. The *gastaldo* was considered a reflection of the doge, who dressed similarly and participated in important ducal ceremonies. The Campo S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli can be considered in a sense to have a similar role to the Piazza S. Marco. Both spaces contain the religious and civic centres of the district (although the Piazza S. Marco is by far the more important as the centre of the city, not just a particular *sestiere*), and both S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli and S. Marco are closely associated with authority. Despite its dedication to the beggars, the interior of S. Nicolò was repeatedly altered and embellished, like S. Marco, and both churches were processional destinations.[248] In the Campo S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli a lion still stands atop a column, a direct reference to the famous column in the Piazzetta of S. Marco (Figs 4.45, 4.46).

The association of the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli with the church of S. Marco and the religious and civic arena of the doge, is significant for the cult of St Nicholas in Venice

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possibly to the Signoria: see p. 9. A *mariegola* is a book containing the foundation statutes and rules for a *scuola*.

[245] Braccolani (1664), p. 38.

[246] 'Prima in Santo Nicolò … à tutti gli Nicolotti pescatori, soggetti al sudetto Gastaldo Grande, che debbono cò ogni pompa maggiore corteggiare il loro capo, & Gastaldo, attendendo con le loro Barche, & Barchette alla bocca del Canale di S. Nicolò per accompagnor lo à S. Marco, & di la al Lido, & dal mare con seguito medemo ritonarlo à S. Nicolò', Braccolani (1664), pp. 37-38. See also Levi Morenos (1898), p. 11, and Sanudo (1980), p. 62. Vicenzo Coronelli attests to the presence of the *gastaldo* at the ceremony at the end of the 17th century. He claims that during the festival of the *Sensa*, following the blessing of the sea by the patriarch, the doge would continue his journey to the Lido in the company of 2 boats, or *Peotta*, in one of which travelled the 'Gastaldo de 'Pescatori della Contrada di S. Nicolò de Mendicoli, called the Doge de 'Nicolotti', Coronelli (1970), p. 16.

[247] 'con questo ordine ancendano in una Barcha grande à modo di Plattone, adornata di belissimi addobbi, e in quella drizzano, espiegono quello standardo con l'immagine di S. Nicolò Vescovo di Nisèa, loro Protettore', Braccolani (1664), p. 39. 'Nisèa' is probably a corruption of 'Myra'.

[248] Processions in Piazza S. Marco probably began in the 12th century. See Fenlon (2007), pp. 85-127.

because it invites comparison between the cults of Sts Nicholas and Mark. This demonstrates that the relationship between the saints, suggested by the twelfth-century translation account quoted at the beginning of this chapter, reflected a reality: ‘O … blessed Venice, whose splendour today rests upon twin columns: you possess the lion who brings you victory in war; you possess the helmsman who does not fear storms at sea.’[249]

CONCLUSION

This case study has presented, for the first time, a comprehensive profile of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice, incorporating documents, monuments and extant artworks.

Venice was the second city in Italy to claim possession of the relics of St Nicholas. The doubt that was occasionally cast over the authenticity of the relics deposited at the church of S. Nicolò di Lido, shows both the necessity of the legitimacy of relics in general, and the influence of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari as the original resting place of the saint’s body in the West. The frequent reassertions of the validity of the Venetian St Nicholas relics also provided repeated opportunities to confirm the superiority of the state of Venice as a keeper of prestigious relics, and also to prove the worth of St Nicholas as an important state saint. The latter was evidently effective, as the 1347 official inspection of the relics on the Lido preceded a period of increased interest in the cult of St Nicholas in Venice, in particular with the foundation of the convent of S. Nicoletto dei Frari.

The shrine of St Nicholas at Bari was consistently unrecognized in Venice, and the relationship between the saint and the Puglian town was not acknowledged by Venetian nomenclature regarding the saint. This denial provides a unique example of how the problem of having two bodies for one particular saint was dealt with. By denying the cult at Bari, and by incorporating the cult of St Nicholas into many prominent aspects of Venetian life, the cult of the

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[249] See p. 196, fn. 1, above.

saint became such an extension of Venetian religious and civic pride, that the possibility of the authenticity of the shrine at Bari was made inconceivable.

The Venetian state had a specific purpose for the cult of St Nicholas. The mosaic inscription in the apse of S. Marco declares the saint's intended role as a protector of the state's seafaring population, and this role was understood and taken up by the general population. St Nicholas was also assigned additional uses, which can be witnessed in a very distinctive aspect of the saint's cult in Venice: the diversity of the monuments dedicated to St Nicholas throughout the city. In the doge's palace, the two St Nicholas chapels both displayed important Venetian ideologies: they were victory monuments, declaring the power Venice had in influencing important situations, but they were also commemorative of the pride Venice promoted within its own religious and civic life. In addition, St Nicholas became the patron of the city's condemned. On the Lido, the cult of St Nicholas was incorporated into the festival of the *Sensa*, an important state ritual that confirmed the ideological importance of the cult of St Nicholas. At the same time, the cult also became associated with the protection of the state during war, through the fortifications built around the monastery. The convent of S. Nicoletto shows that St Nicholas was important on a personal level as a namesaint, and provided a means for the wealthy classes to express their devotion to St Nicholas. The cult could evidently respond to the needs of the general population, not just the elite. The church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli confirms this, as it became a unique religious theatre for the poorer working classes of the state. The city of Venice was a microcosm, in which many aspects of the cult of St Nicholas became manifest.

As well as demonstrating the diverse roles assigned to the cult of St Nicholas in Venice, the monuments dedicated to him in the city represent many different aspects of devotion. S. Nicolò di Lido was a monastic foundation isolated on the Lido, the convent of S. Nicoletto a Franciscan foundation located at the heart of the city. While S. Nicoletto was built as an offering of personal gratitude, S. Nicolò di Lido was a state enterprise, brought to the city's attention every year during the *Sensa* festival. At the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, devotion to St Nicholas was also displayed publically through the festival of the *Sensa* and the processions that took place between the churches of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli and S. Marco. The church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli had its own imitation doge, the *gastaldo*, and a very specific function as the stage for the community of the *Nicolotti*. In contrast, the St Nicholas chapels in the doge's palace were a location for the private, intimate devotion of the actual doge; yet just as in the church of S. Marco, the doge here participated in an act of display, created for the benefit of the city's visiting dignitaries.

In Venice, St Nicholas had two identities: a state saint promoted by the elite, and a popular saint adopted by the wider population. In reflection of these roles, St Nicholas had two images: the orthodox bishop saint as displayed in the church of S. Marco, and the Latin bishop saint that developed in the altarpiece representations. The development of the iconography of St Nicholas in Venice thus followed a unique path. The reasons for this could be various, and perhaps reflect general patterns in the Republic's artistic produce, as the city attracted artists from East and West and displayed works reflective of both traditions. However, the cult of St Nicholas in Venice demonstrates how iconography could be both an important factor in determining the role of a saint, and could perhaps be used to represent differing ideologies.

The state and popular roles of the cult of St Nicholas were intertwined in the unique monument of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli. Here, the official state function of St Nicholas was brought together with popular devotion to the saint, and within the church of S. Nicolò the ritualistic nature of the Venetian state was imitated and emulated, and perhaps even critiqued. The cult of St Nicholas here provided a means for the lower classes to express their views concerning the city's elite. This church also shows an understanding of the ideological significance of St Nicholas to the Venetian state on behalf of the non-elite community. Furthermore, the aspect of the cult emphasized was the role of St Nicholas as a patron of seafarers, indicating that this was the most important role for the state's general population.

At the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, comparisons can be witnessed between the cult of St Nicholas and the most important Venetian state saint, St Mark. Demus has suggested that the reason for entrusting the body of St Nicholas to the monks of S. Nicolò di Lido was to prevent the arrival of the saint from overshadowing the cult of St Mark, Venice's most treasured and powerful political, religious and civil possession.[250] Close comparisons can indeed be drawn between Sts Nicholas and Mark: both were saints from the early centuries of Christianity; both were brought to Venice from far-away, eastern provinces; both saints had performed miracles at sea.[251] At the church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, similarities between the cults, and between the churches of S. Nicolò and S. Marco, were identified and emphasised, indicating that perhaps for the general population of Venice, the importance of the two saints was comparable.

After the fifteenth century, support of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice remained strong. In 1471 a church and hospital dedicated to St Nicholas were founded just south of the monastery of S. Domenico, next to the monastery of S. Antonio in the *sestiere* of Castello. The church and hospital complex was a response to the need for greater hospital facilities for the poor and for mariners injured during Venetian naval activities,[252] indicating that St Nicholas continued to be an important saint for seafarers and the state's fleet. In 1498 the Greek community of Venice founded a confraternity under the name of *Scuola di San Nicolò*, also known as the *nazione*

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[250] Demus (1960), p. 18.

[251] For example, according to the *Legenda Aurea*, some Venetian merchants in Alexandria who had taken passage in a Saracen ship became endangered while at sea. They scrambled into a lifeboat and the ship subsequently sank, taking the Saracens with it. One Saracen however was able to invoke St Mark, vowing to convert if the saint rescued him. Promptly a shining man appeared to him and plucked him out of the sea, placing him in the lifeboat with the Venetians. When, after returning to Alexandria, the Saracen did not convert, St Mark reproached him for his ingratitude, making him realise his error. The Saracen then went to St Mark's church in Venice and converted. See Graesse, ed. (1890), p. 269.

[252] The church was completed in 1500 and consecrated on 25 March 1503, and later destroyed after it was suppressed in 1808 during the Napoleonic suppression. Drawings of the church show it had a Renaissance form with a single nave beneath a double-layered roof, upon which a slender cupola rose from a cylindrical drum. See Umberto Franzoi and Dina Di Stefano, *Le chiese di Venezia* (Venice: Alfieri, 1976), pp. 511-12; Mario Hellmann, *San Nicolò di Lido nella storia, nella cronaca, nell'arte* (Lido di Venezia: Istituto Tipografical Editoriale, 1968), p. 30.

greca.[253] The eastern identity of St Nicholas was thus still important, despite the frequency of the saint's image as a western bishop within the state's artistic produce.

The profile of St Nicholas in Venice is certainly complex; yet the most important aspect of the saint that was promoted is very simple: St Nicholas was venerated because he was the patron saint of seafarers, and could protect the Venetian population during their dealings at sea. All levels of Venetian society relied upon the sea, for many reasons; St Nicholas was thus a saint who could respond to the entire population of Venice, ensuring his flourishing cult and continuing popularity beyond the Middle Ages.

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[253] Maria Georgopoulou, 'Venice and the Byzantine Sphere', in Evans, ed. (2004), p. 494.

CONCLUSION

In the year 1244, Compagnone dei Guarutti and his wife Amata de'Guidami undertook a pilgrimage to the tomb of St Nicholas at Bari. Their visit was inspired by an angel that had visited them in a dream in response to their desire for a son. At the tomb, St Nicholas appeared to the couple, informing them that they would have a son and that he should be called Nicholas. The following year Amata gave birth to a son who went on to take the habit of the Augustinian order, and died in 1305. Twenty years later, in 1325, an inquiry for the canonisation of the Augustinian friar was convened, and 365 witnesses attested to the sanctity of the man who would become St Nicholas of Tolentino.[1]

In the fourteenth century, the links between the cult of St Nicholas and the mendicant orders intensified. With the establishment of the cult of St Nicholas of Tolentino, the Augustinian order promoted a new St Nicholas, whose existence was a direct consequence of the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari. St Nicholas of Tolentino was an exemplary mendicant saint, and the founding of his cult demonstrates the influence that the cult of St Nicholas was able to assert within the new spiritual era of the later Middle Ages. In the Cappellone of S. Nicola at Tolentino, the resting place of the new St Nicholas, the lower tier of the frescoed interior displays a cycle of the saint's life and miracles, dated c.1310-48 and attributed to Pietro da Rimini.[2] This cycle includes a scene of the miracle of the saint's Birth, in which St Nicholas appears to his parents Compagnone and

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[1] For the life, miracles, and canonisation of St Nicholas of Tolentino, see *San Nicola, Tolentino, le Marche: Contribute e ricerche sul processo (a. 1325) per la canonizzazione di San Nicola da Tolentino: convegno internazionale di studi, Tolentino, 4-7 Settembre 1985* (Tolentino: Biblioteca Egidiana di Tolentino, 1987), especially the chapters by André Vauchez, 'Il processo di canonizzazione di S. Nicola da Tolentino quale fonte storica (Marche 1325)', pp. 45-54; Domenico Gentili, 'Le fonti per la conoscenza di S. Nicola: il processo, i sommari, la biografia de Pietro da Monterubbiano', pp. 197-204. For the Augustinian order, see Louise Bourdua and Anne Dunlop, eds, *Art and the Augustinian Order in Early Renaissance Italy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), esp. the chapter by Anne Dunlop, 'Introduction: The Augustinians, the Mendicant Orders, and Early-Renaissance Art', pp. 1-15.

[2] The date and artist of the cycle are disputed. See Anne Dunlop, 'Black Humour: The Cappellone at Tolentino', in Bourdua and Dunlop, eds (2007), pp. 79-98. See also Miklòs Boskovits, 'La decorazione pittorica del Cappellone di S. Nicola a Tolentino', and Fabio Bisogni, 'Gli inizi dell'iconografia di Nicola da Tolentino e gli affreschi del Cappellone', both in *San Nicola, Tolentino, le Marche* (1987), pp. 245-54, 255-324.

Amata (Fig. 5.1). St Nicholas is the largest figure within the cycle, and the scene is placed prominently on the east wall, to the right of the *Crucifixion* located above the altar (Fig. 5.2). On the north wall of the Cappellone the cycle displays a scene of *St Nicholas of Tolentino Saving a Ship in a Storm* (Fig. 5.3). Tolentino was not a maritime community, and St Nicholas of Tolentino was not frequently represented as a saviour of seafarers. The visual association made between this saint and St Nicholas, whose sea miracles were amongst the most frequently represented in cycles of the saint's life in Italian art, was surely intentional.

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This thesis has demonstrated for the first time that the associations between the cult of St Nicholas and the mendicant orders, demonstrated clearly by the establishment of the cult of St Nicholas of Tolentino, were integral to the prominence and widespread popularity of the cult of St Nicholas in medieval Italy. A key issue that has been considered in the preceding chapters is how St Nicholas came to attract the attention of so many varied groups in Italy. For a saint whose origins were firmly rooted within the orthodox world, his flourishing cult in Italy presents an alternative to the dominant profiles of sanctity prevalent after the thirteenth century. This question has recently been posed for other saints whose cults follow a similar path of development; this thesis has applied this question for the first time to the cult of St Nicholas, with the intention of gaining a greater understanding of how the cult was understood in Italy and of the roles that the cult of the saints could play for medieval Italian society as a whole. Through appropriation and promotion by the mendicant orders, in particular the Franciscans, the cult of St Nicholas was regenerated and updated, enabling the saint to continue to respond to the devotional needs of a new spiritual era.

The promotion of the cult of St Nicholas by the mendicant orders helped to integrate the cult within contemporary Italian life, and can be considered an important step in a long process of

Latinisation. Chapter One has identified this process as a significant shift within the cult of St Nicholas, which can be seen most clearly within the saint's hagiography and iconography. The flexibility and adaptability of the cult of St Nicholas aided the cult's successful move between East and West. Chapter One has demonstrated that the original Greek hagiography of St Nicholas became gradually assimilated and expanded by western literary traditions, so that by the thirteenth century a new St Nicholas had emerged that was considerably altered from the Greek; Chapter Two has shown that this process also occurred within the saint's iconography.

The iconographical survey presented in Chapter Two has contributed to the St Nicholas literature by advancing the work begun by Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, building on her analysis of the eastern material pertaining to the cult of St Nicholas by extending it to Italy. The survey has demonstrated how the iconography of St Nicholas developed as the cult moved from an orthodox to Latin context. It has illustrated overall trends, provided a context for the developments, and assessed their implications for the cult in Italy as a whole. As with the hagiography of the saint, the iconography of St Nicholas also underwent important revisions. Over the centuries, the image of the saint came to reflect the cult's Italian audience, as his vestments changed from those of an orthodox bishop to Latin. The new visual identity of St Nicholas that dominated after the thirteenth century indicates that by this time St Nicholas was understood in Italy as a Latin saint, rather than an orthodox one. Chapter Two has suggested that this important transition helped the cult of St Nicholas to remain relevant and accessible.

In addition to the change in the saint's ecclesiastical vestments, the cycles of the life and miracles of St Nicholas also display significant developments. Partly a response to the updating of the saint's hagiography, and partly a cause for this, the St Nicholas cycles began to include episodes that had no precedents within Byzantine art or the Greek legends. These new additions, for example the scenes representing the conversion of Jews and the saint's resuscitation of three pickled boys, indicate that the cycles were adapted to the concerns of their Italian audience. This chapter has emphasised the intertwined relationship between the hagiography and iconography of

St Nicholas, demonstrating that each could be dependent upon the other, and that both must be considered in order to obtain an accurate impression of how the cult was understood. Chapter Two has also considered the impact of practical decisions upon the cycles, in particular how the length of a cycle influenced its capacity to portray particular concerns. Despite the spatial limitations, the reduction in the number of scenes represented in a cycle in fact offered the possibility to communicate a specific, focused message. The extensive iconography associated with St Nicholas enabled flexibility within the cycles, which could accommodate a variety of concerns.

The Latinisation of the cult of St Nicholas, and the further integration of the cult into Latin spirituality through association with the mendicant orders, were vital to the widespread popularity of the cult in Italy in the later Middle Ages. However, this thesis has highlighted the great complexity of the cult and has shown that many further factors contributed to its prominence. For example, the support of the papacy and the rulers of medieval Italy gave the cult a strong, recognisable presence in terms of church building and donations. The particular elements of the saint's personality that were emphasised indicate why St Nicholas received such privileged support. The popes who promoted the Gregorian Reform movement championed St Nicholas because he had expressed concerns consistent with clerical reform during his life. For Pope Urban II and King Roger II of Sicily, St Nicholas demonstrated that East and West could be successfully united. St Nicholas was an example of a model bishop, and could offer the prestige that was associated with longevity and tradition. Because St Nicholas appealed to diverse social groups, his appropriation by the ruling classes helped to give them influence and control.

The most significant factor that influenced the development and popularity of the cult of St Nicholas in medieval Italy was the translation of his relics, first to Bari in 1087 and then to Venice in 1099. The specific profiles of the cult that subsequently developed in these regions were unique, and the case studies in Chapters Three and Four have shown that Puglia and Venice offer alternatives to the general trends that the earlier chapters have identified for the cult elsewhere in Italy. These case studies demonstrate the powerful impact that the presence of a saint's relics could have, both on the cult of the saint and on the region into which the relics were brought. Both Puglia and Venice had existing cults of St Nicholas; the translations at the end of the eleventh century, however, gave these cults an enormous boost in both locations, and the ripple effects were profound and far-reaching.

Chapter Three has qualified the assumption that the shrine of St Nicholas at Bari was one of the most popular medieval pilgrimage destinations in Latin Christendom. While this popularity is not refuted, Chapter Three has demonstrated that it was the consequence of many factors and not just a result of the saint's reputation. The shrines of the saints were not disconnected entities, but were closely linked within the wider context of international pilgrimage and devotion. The shrine of St Nicholas at Bari became integrated within an established pilgrimage itinerary of Puglian shrines, and an intricate relationship developed in particular between the Bari shrine and the cult site of the Archangel Michael at Monte S. Angelo. These two sites became connected in the *Iter Magnum*, and their success became partly dependent on each other. A further factor was the involvement of Bari in the crusades. Shortly after the establishment of the church of S. Nicola at Bari, crusaders passed through the port en route to the Holy Land, increasing the international exposure of the newly founded shrine. St Nicholas consequently became associated with boat journeys and crusading triumphs, and the port of Bari became synonymous with the relics that were preserved there. The location of Bari by the sea and the reputation of St Nicholas as a maritime saint proved a potent combination, and provoked a strong following within the seafaring community of Puglia. These factors all demonstrate that the Latinisation of the cult of St Nicholas was not the only means by which the cult could adapt and remain relevant to its Italian audience.

The translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Bari impacted upon the existing cult of the saint within the region, but the event also provoked local reactions, assessed for the first time in Chapter Three. These are important because they indicate the ways in which the cult of a saint could be used, and the range of effects that the success of the shrine at Bari had in different communities. Within Bari, the establishment of the shrine of St Nicholas provoked civil rivalry, and in response the cult of St Sabinus was promoted as an alternative to attract pilgrims to the city's cathedral. At Benevento, an antagonistic campaign was waged in order to discredit the shrine at Bari and to draw pilgrims there instead. These two examples suggest a negative element to the cult of the saints that is little-emphasised. At Trani, on the other hand, a new cult was established in direct response to the shrine at Bari, which shows that rivalry could be emulative as well as critical. Through imitation of the shrine at Bari and particular aspects of the personality of St Nicholas, the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim at Trani gained prestige and a place upon the sacred map. Chapter Three has identified the cult of St Nicholas the Pilgrim at Trani as an important repercussion of the translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Bari, and has brought together for the first time all the surviving visual evidence for the cult in Italian art.

The final chapter of this thesis has presented, for the first time, an overview of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice. St Nicholas was represented prolifically in the most prestigious locations in the city of Venice and the cult was visible throughout the Middle Ages and beyond. Chapter Four has covered the history of the cult from the saint's first (pre-translation) appearance in the apse mosaics of the church of S. Marco, to the late-fifteenth-century construction of the second St Nicholas chapel within the doge's palace. The chapter has drawn from a variety of sources including images, documents and monuments pertaining to the cult. It has also used previously under-exploited resources for the purposes of gaining a greater understanding of the cult of St Nicholas in Venice.

As a case study, Venice presents a profile of the cult of St Nicholas that incorporates many of the aspects of the cult seen in Puglia and elsewhere in Italy. The importance of the relics of St Nicholas to the Republic of Venice declared within the mosaic decoration of S. Marco shows a desire to establish an official identity for St Nicholas. Consequently, St Nicholas was considered a powerful protector of the state's navy. St Nicholas was also a saint that different social levels and groups within Venice could access, and this is reflected in the diverse monuments and art works associated with the saint in Venice emphasising many aspects of his personality. The repeated image of the saint in the church of S. Marco, and the chapels dedicated to him in the doge's palace, emphasise the elite support given to the cult. At the same time, the cult appealed to the mendicant orders within the city and to the poorer community, who used the cult as a means of expressing their concerns regarding the rulers of the state. St Nicholas thus had dual identities within Venice, connected to his roles as a state saint and as a saint for popular devotion. The complexity of the roles that the cult of St Nicholas played within Venice perhaps demonstrates most clearly that the cult of a saint was not a detached religious symbol, but could become both an important aspect of daily life and a vehicle for expressing pride, power and prestige.

The cults of St Nicholas at Venice and Bari share many characteristics. These two important commercial ports both claimed to posses the body of St Nicholas, which was deposited within a church located by the sea, reflecting the role of St Nicholas as the patron of mariners and influencing the shape of the cult that later developed there. Both shrines became important points for departure for those travelling to the east, either for pilgrimage or for the crusades. However, the body of St Nicholas could not be in two locations at once, and an interesting point to emerge from Chapter Four is the doubt that was occasionally associated with the body of the saint kept in the church on the Lido. Additionally, the perceived Venetian attitude of denial towards the shrine of the saint at Bari shows again that the Puglian shrine did not always provoke positive reactions, suggesting that the antagonism seen in the rival cult site at Benevento ran further afield. In the case of Venice, the commercial rivalry between the two powerful ports perhaps became manifest in the Venetian state's claim to the true body of St Nicholas and denial of the authenticity of the shrine at Bari. St Nicholas was often linked to the cult of St Mark in Venice, in art works and in monuments; this juxtaposition suggests the enormous prestige associated with St Nicholas in Venice, and of the need for certainty concerning the legitimacy of such an important state saint's relics.

The cult of St Nicholas was fluid and could adapt to many different situations, places, audiences and ideologies. Within the communities to where the saint's relics were brought at the end of the eleventh century, the cult of St Nicholas had a profound impact upon local sanctity and prosperity. In each location, the cult developed within unique circumstances according to the roles assigned to him. The cult reflected aspects of society both within a religious context, and with many aspects of daily life, for example commercial rivalry, although within these broader parameters particular developments could be haphazard. The prominence of St Nicholas in Italy in the later Middle Ages was the result of a variety of often interconnected factors, and the preceding chapters have examined these in order to gain a greater understanding of the cult, both in general and in the specific locations of Puglia and Venice.

* * *

In the 1476 Bari altarpiece painted by Bartolomeo Vivarini (Fig. 3.21), the cults of St Nicholas at Venice and Bari were drawn together. This altarpiece was commissioned for the church of S. Nicola at Bari by a Venetian resident of the town, where it remains today. The traditional arrangement of the saints in this *sacra conversazione* acquires an additional significance because of the positions of Sts Nicholas and Mark. Despite the altarpiece's destination of the most important shrine of St Nicholas in Italy, the Venetian state saint is still given prominence. This arrangement may have been a statement of civic pride on behalf of the altarpiece's Venetian donor who, while obviously devoted to St Nicholas, presumably held St Mark in higher esteem. However, it also reflects a political situation at the close of the fifteenth century that affected both Venice and Puglia.

In 1493, King Charles VIII of France (1483-98) invaded Italy to take control of the southern Kingdom of Naples, which he claimed as his hereditary right as the grandson of Marie of Anjou. At the request of King Ferdinand II (1452-1516), who was struggling to re-conquer his land, Venice, together with the papacy, assisted the Aragonese ruler in ousting the invading king of France.[3] During this conflict, the Venetian state took forceful control of the Puglian towns of Polignano a Mare and Monopoli, and was awarded the towns of Trani, Brindisi and Taranto by Ferdinand II in gratitude for the Republic's support.[4] Venice ruled these towns for a brief period from 1496 until 1509, when the forces of power in southern Italy shifted and the state was forced to return the towns to the Spanish king.[5] The Vivarini altarpiece would therefore have been present in Bari at a time when the political interests of the Venetian state extended into Puglia and the territorial ambitions of the Republic would have been felt throughout the region. In this context, the superiority given to the Venetian state saint represented on the Vivarini altarpiece mirrors the dominating attitude of Venice towards the region of Puglia at the end of the fifteenth century.

The Vivarini altarpiece is also important because it introduced to Bari the new visual identity of St Nicholas as a Latin bishop that had developed in Venice and throughout the rest of Italy. Would this image of St Nicholas have been immediately recognisable to its Barese audience? The contrasting representations of St Nicholas as an orthodox and Latin bishop in Italian art emphasise an important point to emerge from this thesis: while the cult of St Nicholas underwent fundamental and significant transformations as it moved between East and West, these did not occur universally across Italy. Further transitions occurred in particular locations which resulted in distinct profiles of St Nicholas, and were symptomatic of diverse factors and wider issues.

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[3] The invasion of King Charles VIII of France and the subsequent re-conquering of Naples by the Aragonese King Ferdinand were described by the contemporary Venetian historian Pietro Bembo. Bembo was commissioned by the Venetian state to record the events concerning the Republic which occurred between the years 1487-1516. See Pietro Bembo, *History of Venice*, ed. and trans. Robert W. Ulery (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007). See esp. vol. 1, book 2, pp. 79-165.

[4] Bembo (2007), vol. 1, pp. 171, 189-91. See also Edward Augustus Freeman, *Sketches from the Subject and Neighbour Lands of Venice* (Charleston, S.C.: BiblioBazaar, 2008), pp. 288-96. An inscription near a church in Trani records the name of Giuliano Gradenigo, the Venetian governor of Trani in 1503. Freeman (2008), p. 296.

[5] Bembo (2007), vol. 2, p. 311.

At the close of the Middle Ages, the material produced in relation to the cult of St Nicholas in Italy continued to echo contemporary themes. Four centuries after the saint's body was brought to Italy and a thousand years after the saint's death, St Nicholas was still considered an appropriate figure through which to communicate political, religious and social concerns.

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THE CULT OF ST NICHOLAS IN MEDIEVAL ITALY

VOLUME 3 OF 3

SARAH BURNETT

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE
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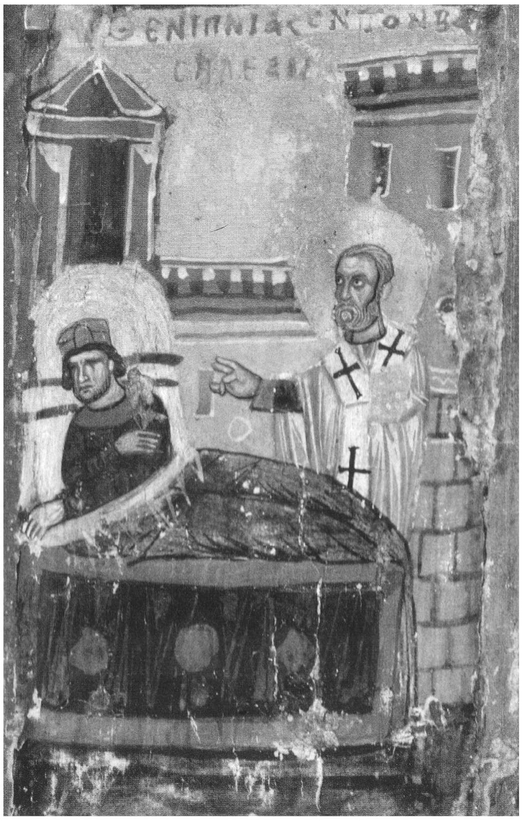

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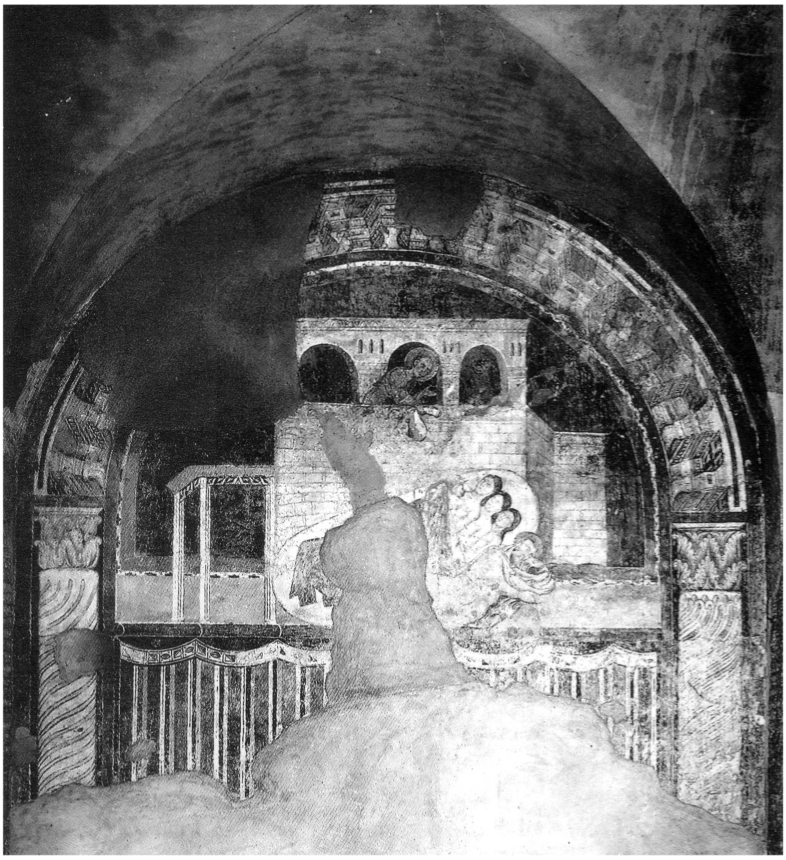

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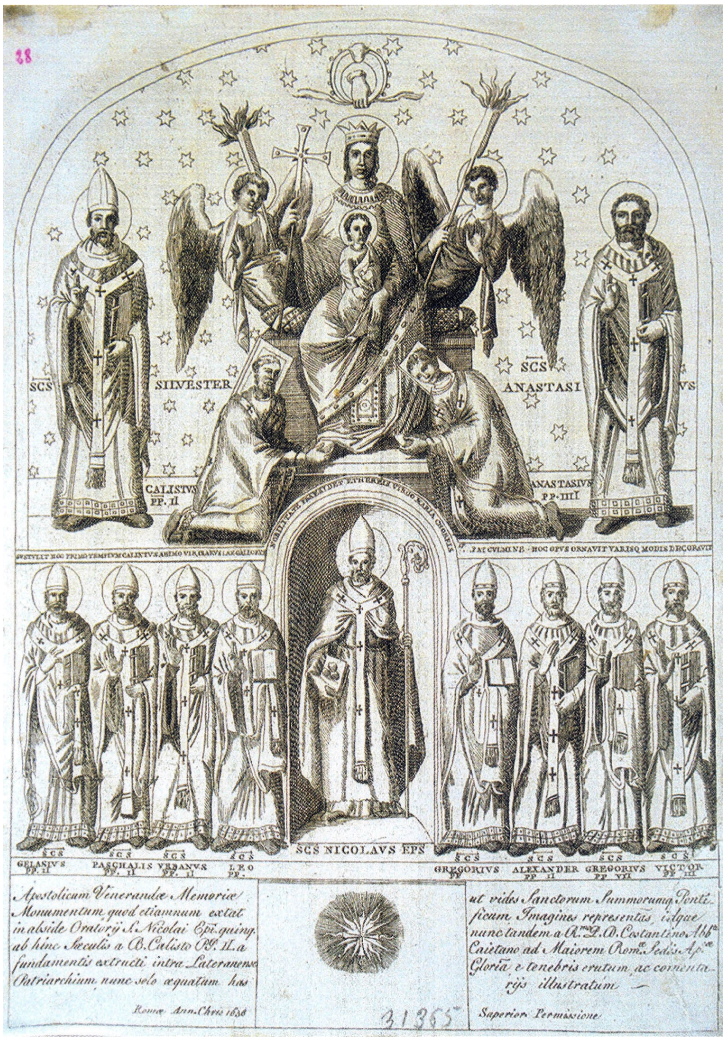

Apostolicam Venerandæ Memoriæ
Monumentum quod etiamnum extat
in absìde Oratorij S. Nicolai Epi. quinq.
ab hinc Sæculis a B. Calisto PP. II. a
fundamentis extructi intra Lateranense
Patriarchium, nunc solo æquatum has

Romæ Ann. Chris. 1638

ut vides Sanctorum Summorumq. Ponti-
ficum Imagines representas, idque
nunc tandem a R.mo P. D. Costantino Abb.te
Caietano ad Maiorem Rom.æ Sedis Ap.cæ
Gloriã, e tenebris erutum, ac commenta-
rijs illustratum

Superior. Permissione

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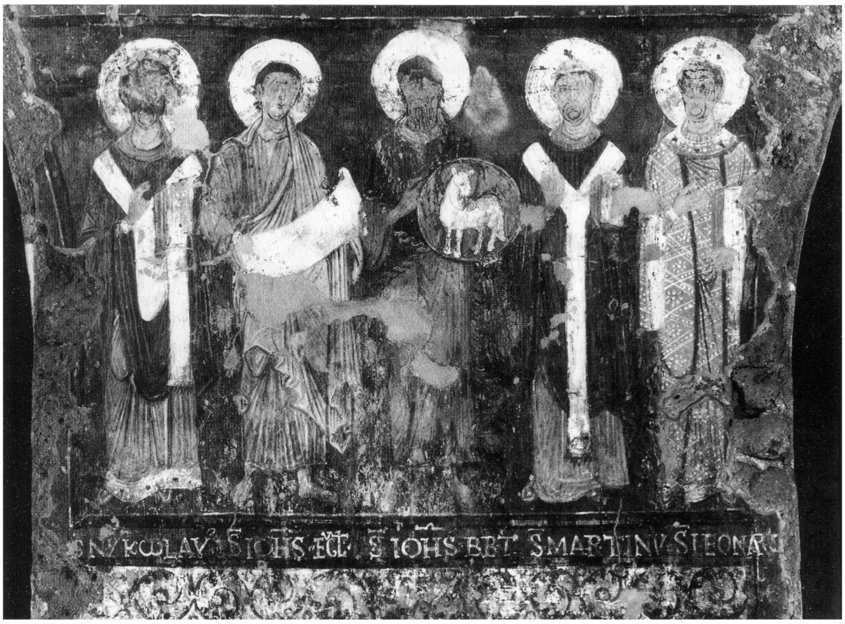

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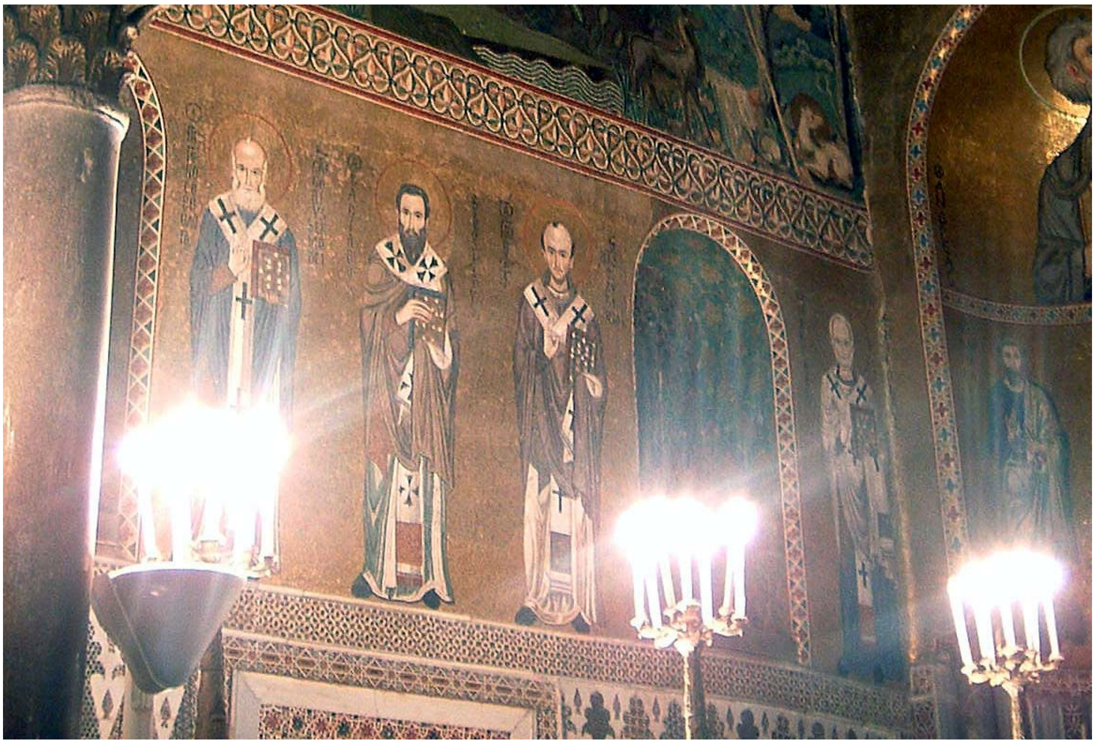

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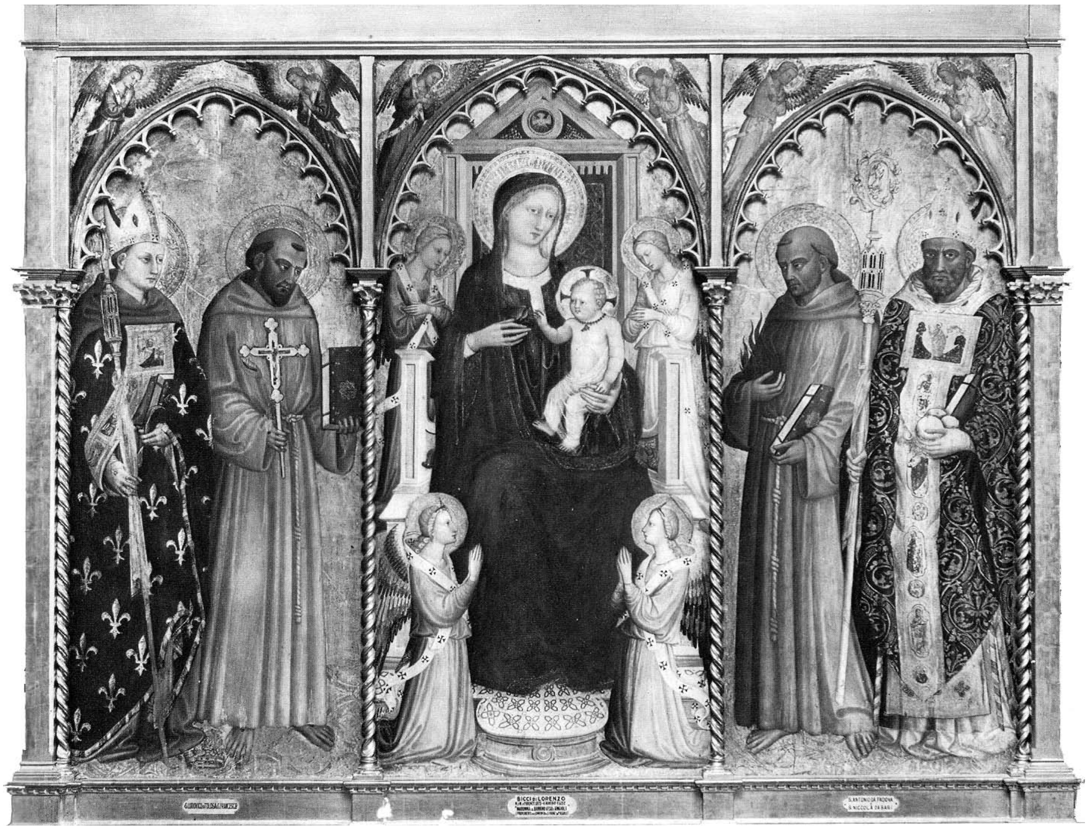

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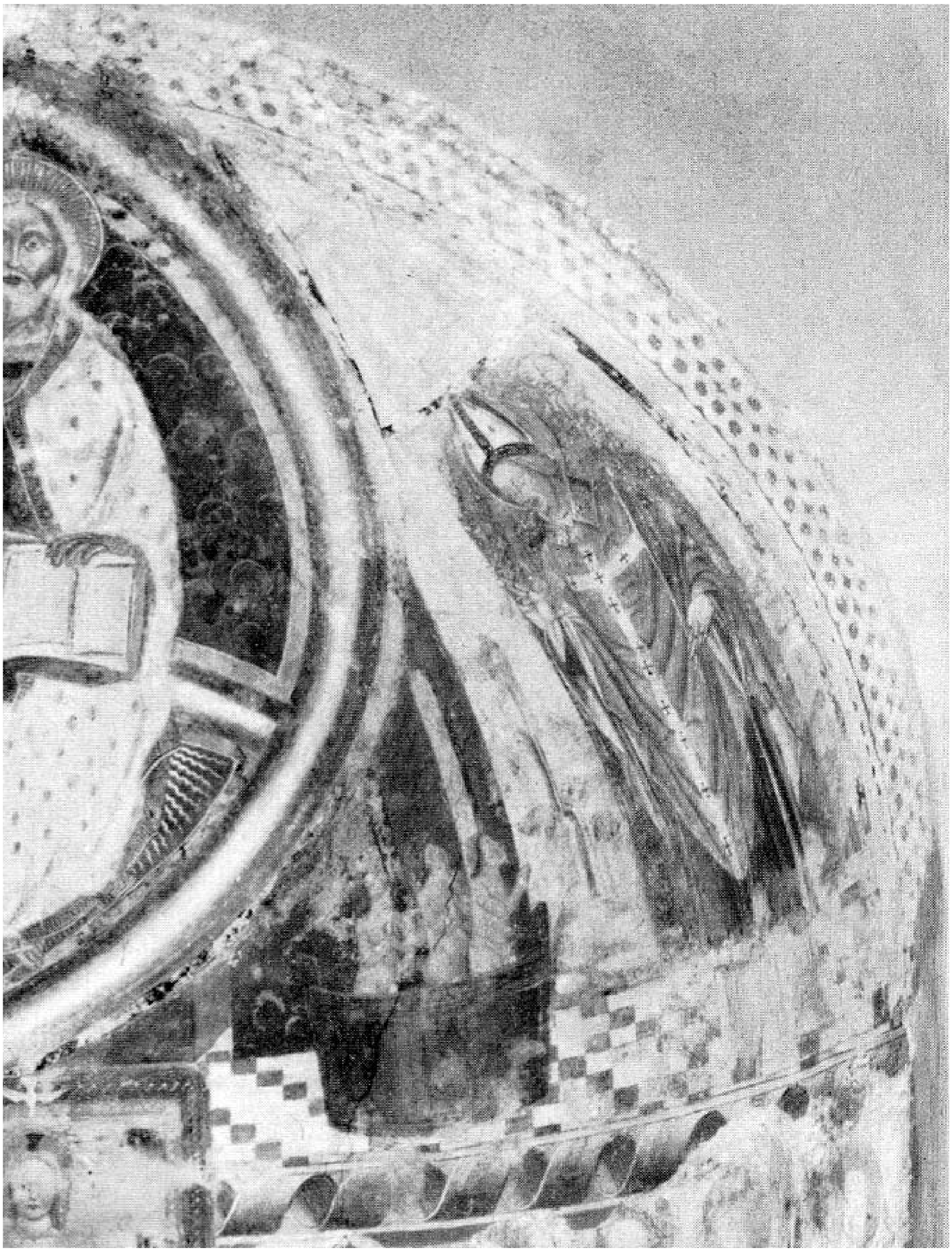

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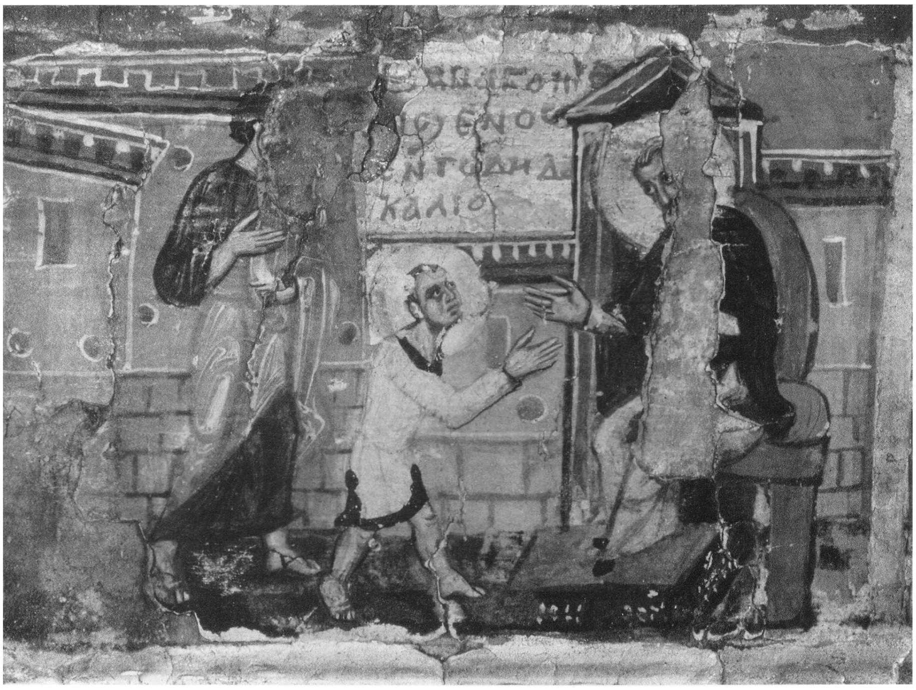

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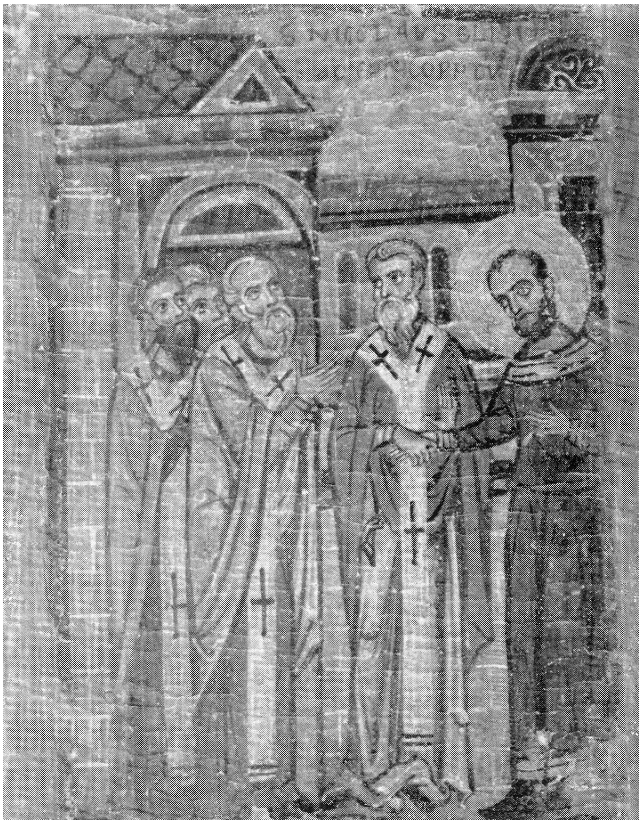

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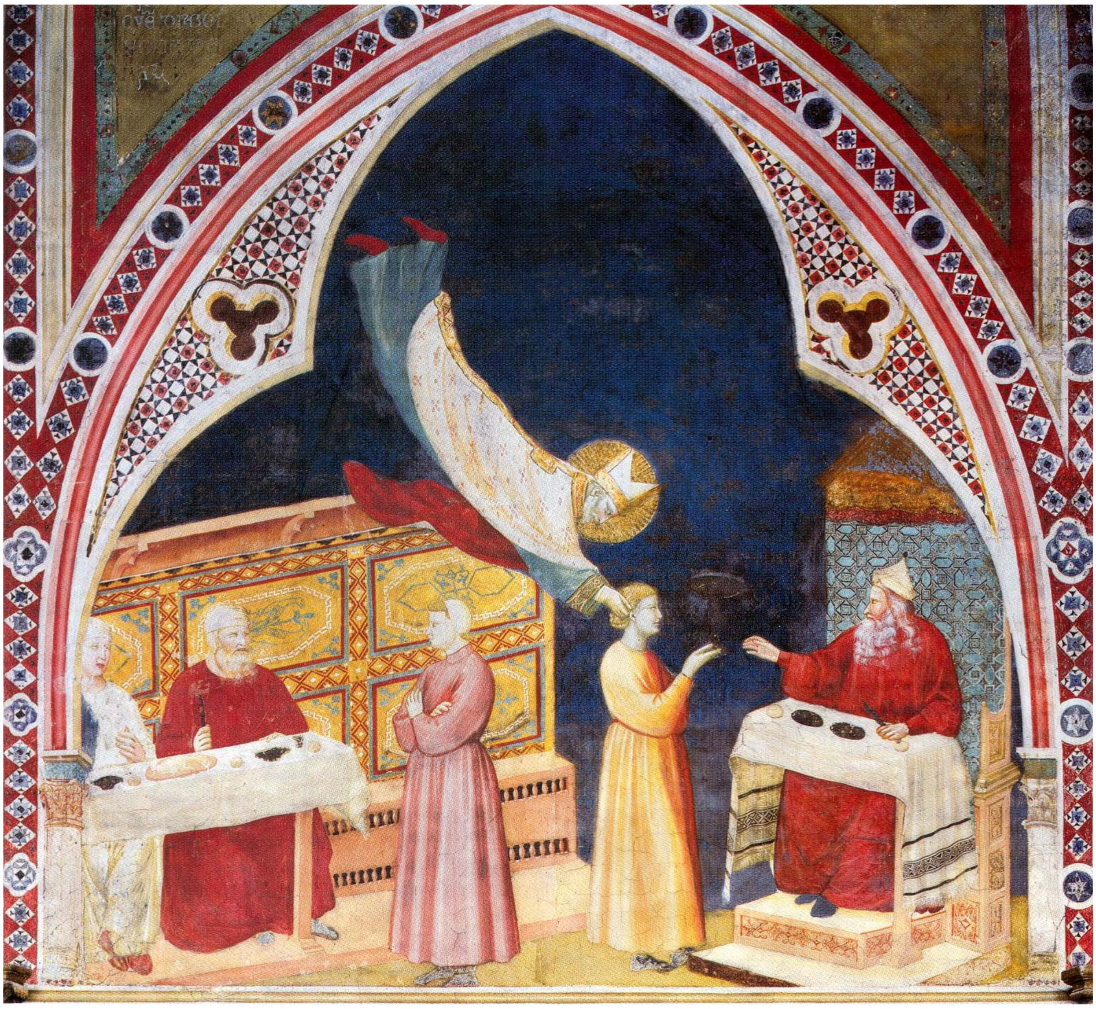

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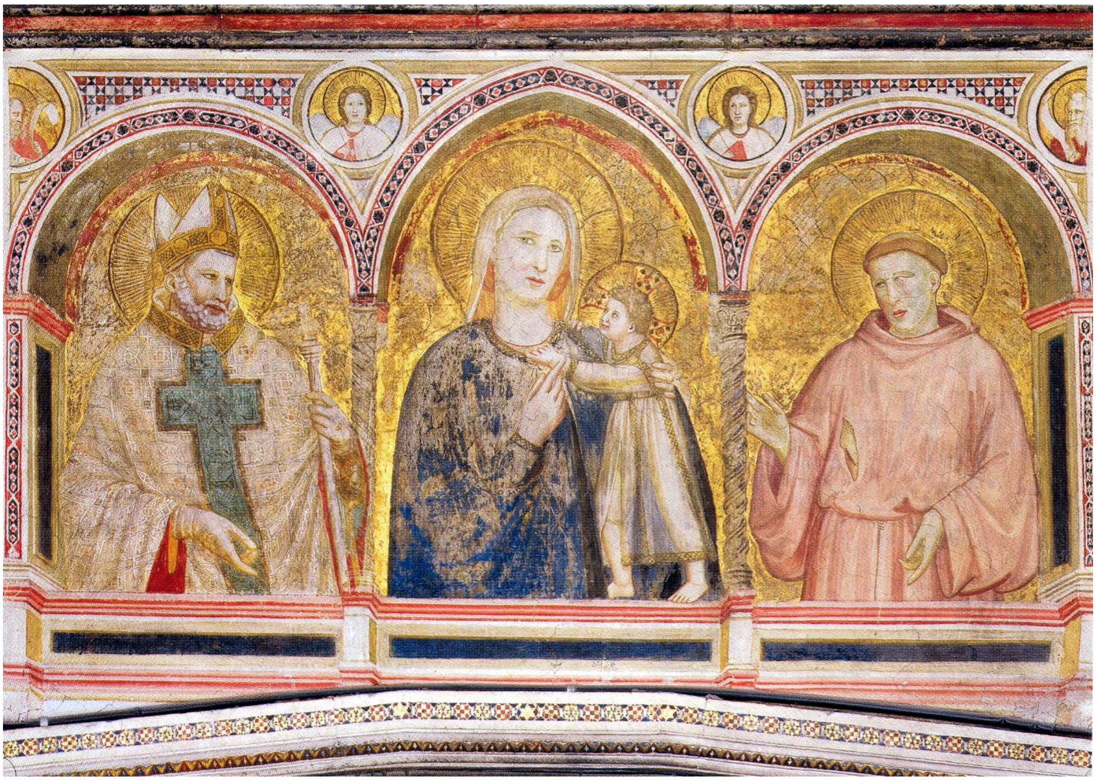

Figure 2.47: Master of St Nicholas, *Madonna and Child between St Nicholas and St Francis*, c.1300, oil on panel, Chapel of St Nicholas, Lower Church of S. Francesco, Assisi, located above the tomb of Gian Gaetano.

Figure 2.48: Workshop of Agnolo Gaddi, *The Boy and the Golden Cup*, c.1384, fresco, Castellani Chapel, Church of Sta Croce, Florence, south wall. Author's photograph.

Figure 2.49: Workshop of Agnolo Gaddi, *The Jew and the Cheating Christian*, c.1384, fresco, Castellani Chapel, Church of Sta Croce, Florence, south wall. Author's photograph.

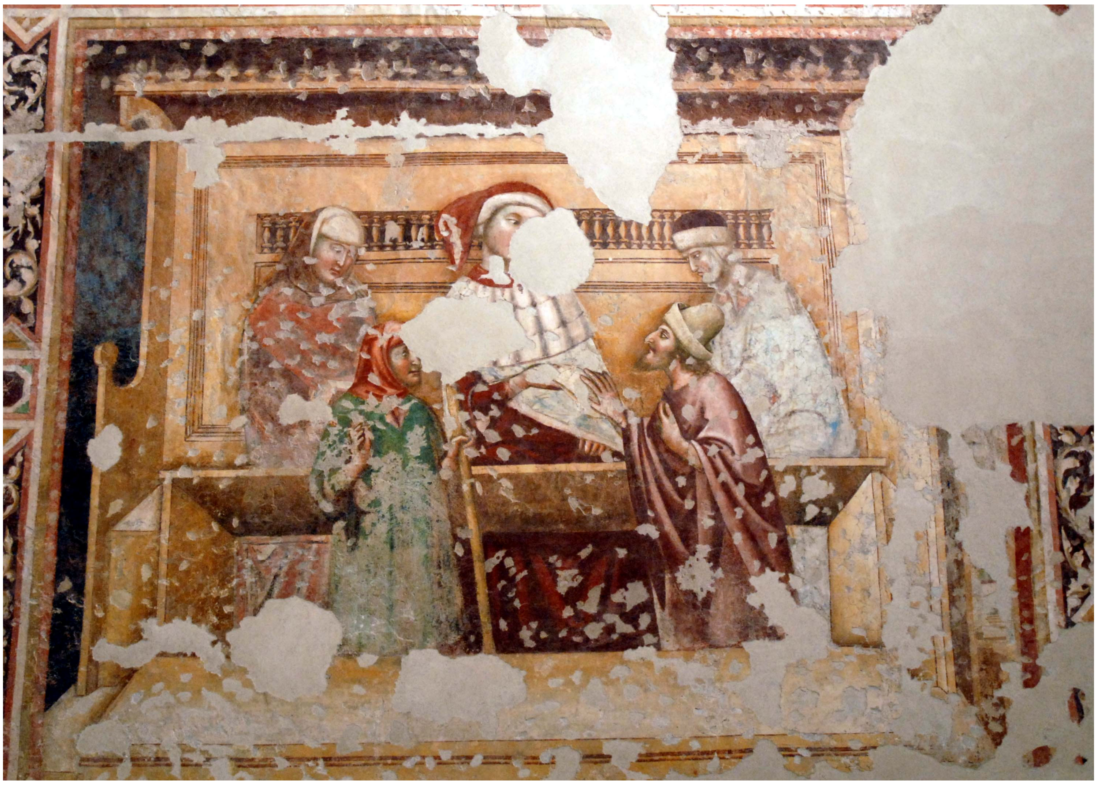

Figure 2.50: Vitale da Bologna, *The Jew and the Cheating Christian*, 1349, fresco, Chapel of St Nicholas, Cathedral of Udine, south wall. Author's photograph.

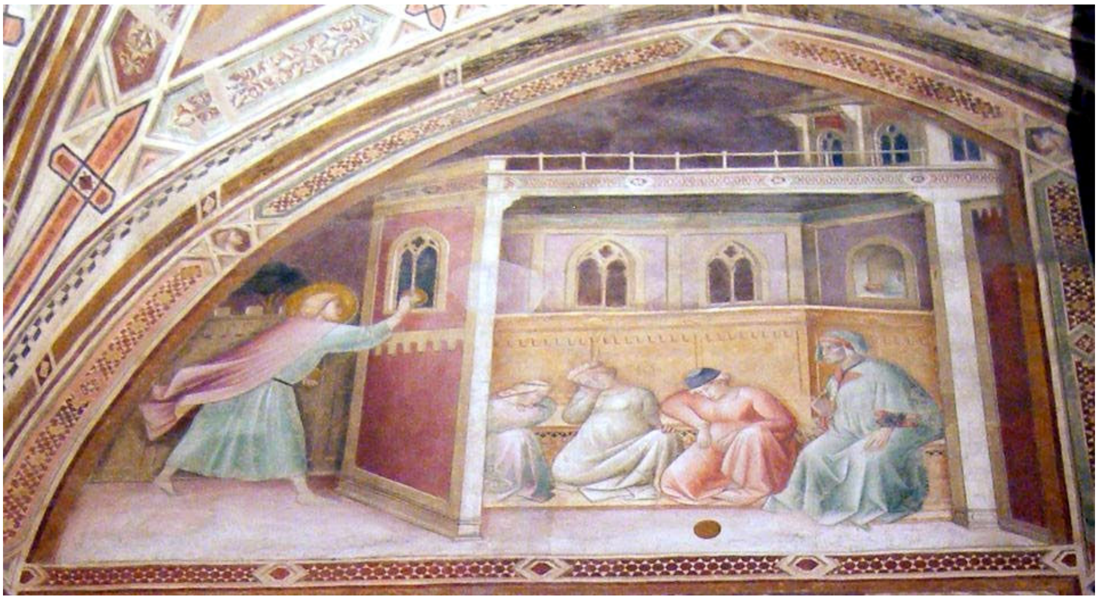

Figure 2.51: Workshop of Agnolo Gaddi, *The Three Destitute Maidens*, c.1384, fresco, Castellani Chapel, Church of Sta Croce, Florence, south wall. Author's photograph.

Figure 2.52: *Adeodatus*, fourteenth century, fresco, Chapel of S. Giovanni, Church of S. Domenico, Bolzano, north wall.

Figure 2.53: Vitale da Bologna, *The Boy and the Golden Cup*, 1349, fresco, Chapel of St Nicholas, Cathedral of Udine, south wall. Author's photograph.

Figure 2.54: Vitale da Bologna, *The Innkeeper and the Salted Salesman*, 1349, fresco, Chapel of St Nicholas, Cathedral of Udine, south wall. Author's photograph.

Figure 2.55: *The Three Destitute Maidens*, fourteenth century, fresco, Chapel of S. Giovanni, Church of S. Domenico, Bolzano, north wall.

Figure 2.56: Workshop of Agnolo Gaddi, *The Innkeeper and the Three Pickled Boys*, c.1384, fresco, Castellani Chapel, Church of Sta Croce, Florence, south wall. Author's photograph.

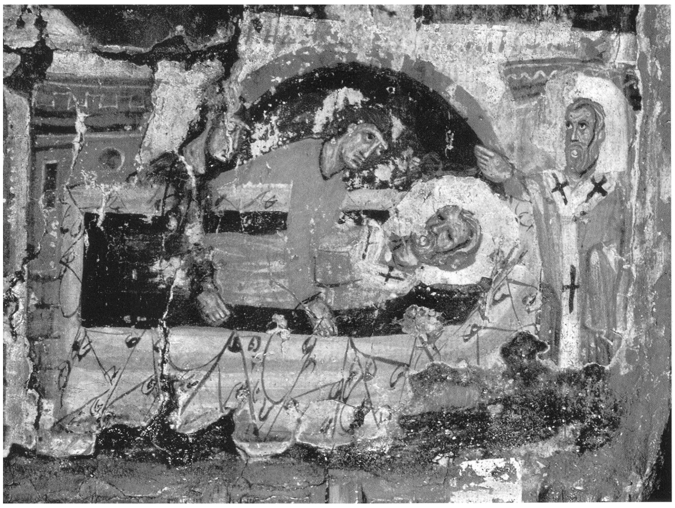

Figure 2.57: *The Death of St Nicholas*, detail of *St Nicholas with Scenes from his Life*, late-twelfth century, tempera on panel, Monastery of St Catherine, Mt Sinai.

Figure 2.58: Vitale da Bologna, *The Funeral of St Nicholas*, 1349, fresco, Chapel of St Nicholas, Cathedral of Udine, south wall. Author's photograph.

Figure 2.59: *The Miracle of the Tomb*, early-fifteenth century, fresco, Church of S. Giovanni Battista, Vittorio Veneto, location unknown.

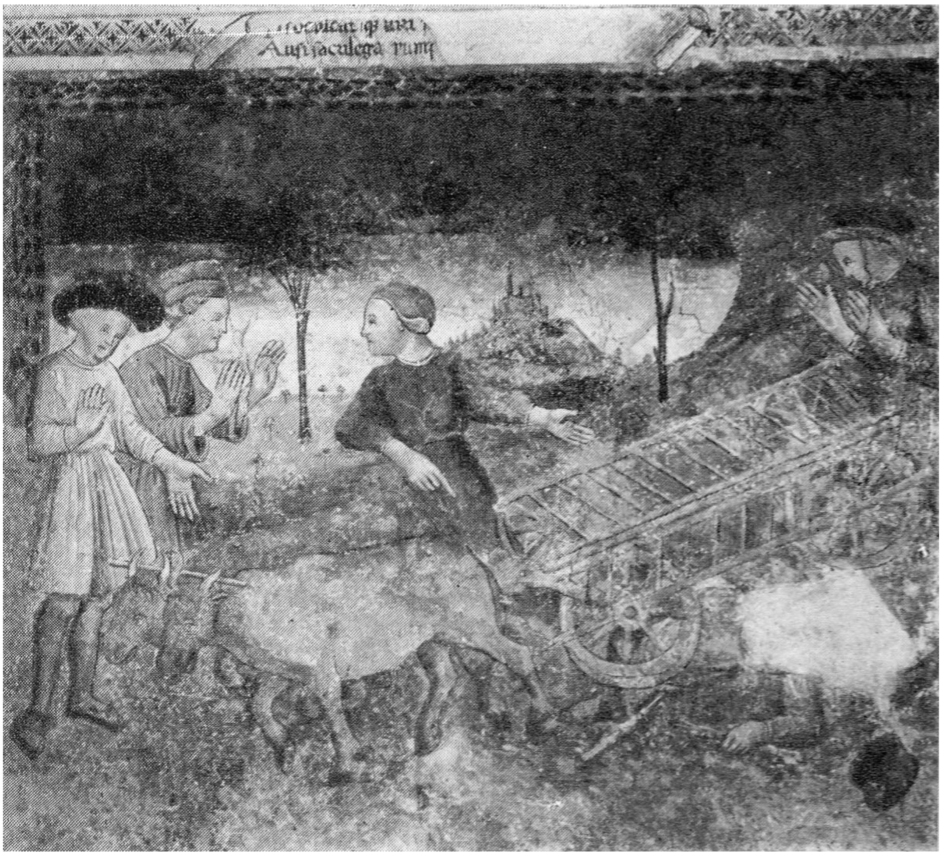

Figure 2.60: *The Jew and the Cheating Christian*, early-fifteenth century, fresco, Church of S. Giovanni Battista, Vittorio Veneto, location unknown.

Figure 2.61: *St Nicholas Exorcises a Young Man*, early-fifteenth century, fresco, Church of S. Giovanni Battista, Vittorio Veneto, location unknown.

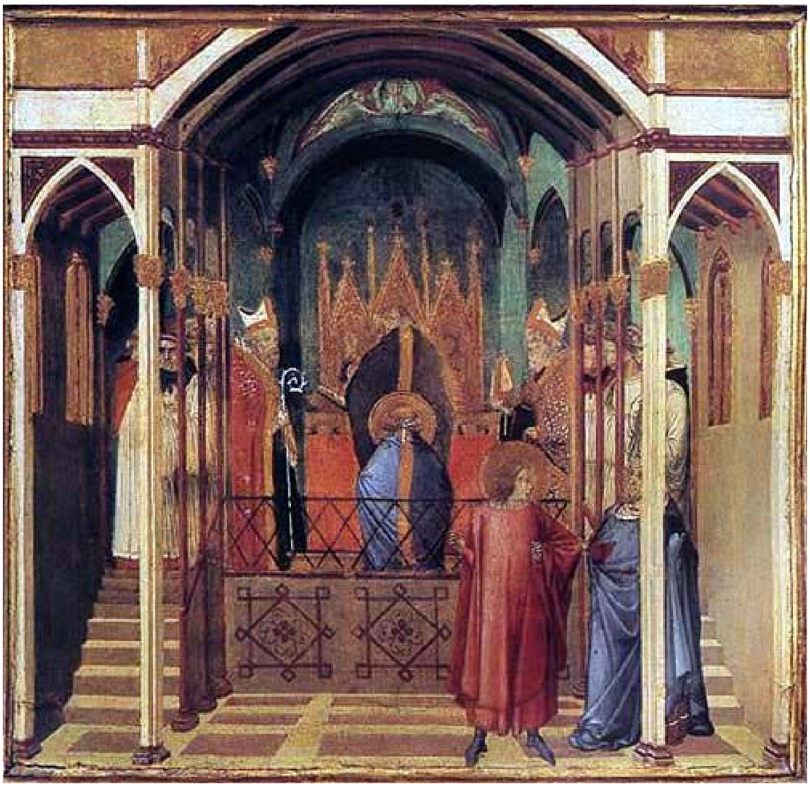

Figure 2.62: Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *St Nicholas is Consecrated as Bishop*, c.1327-32, tempera on panel, Uffizi Galleries, Florence.

Figure 2.63: Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *The Miracle of the Corn Ships*, c.1327-32, tempera on panel, Uffizi Galleries, Florence.

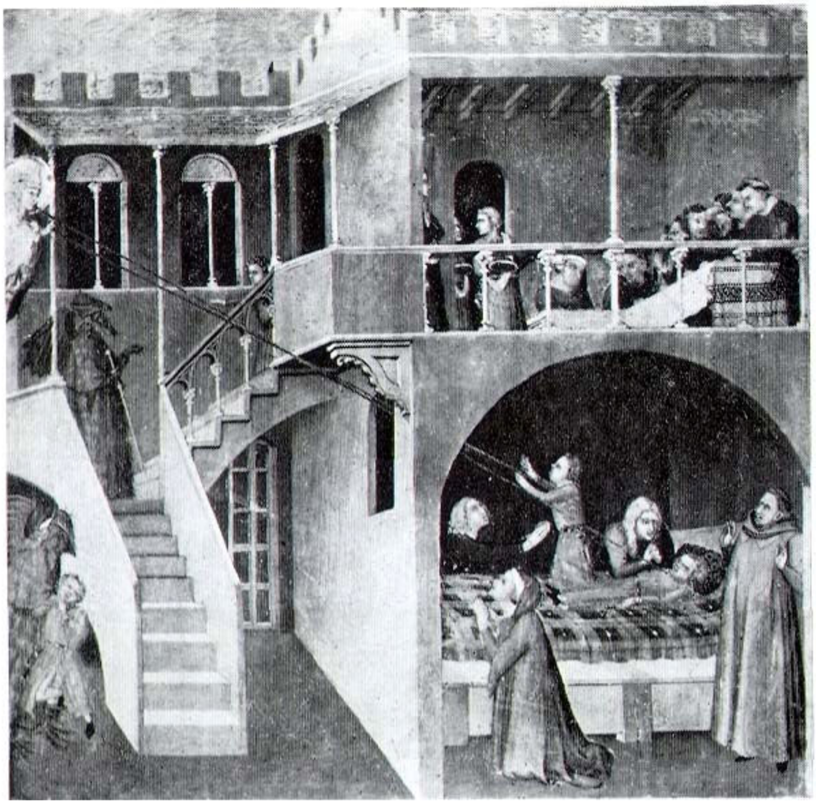

Figure 2.64: Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *St Nicholas Revives a Boy Strangled by the Devil*, c.1327-32, tempera on panel, Uffizi Galleries, Florence.

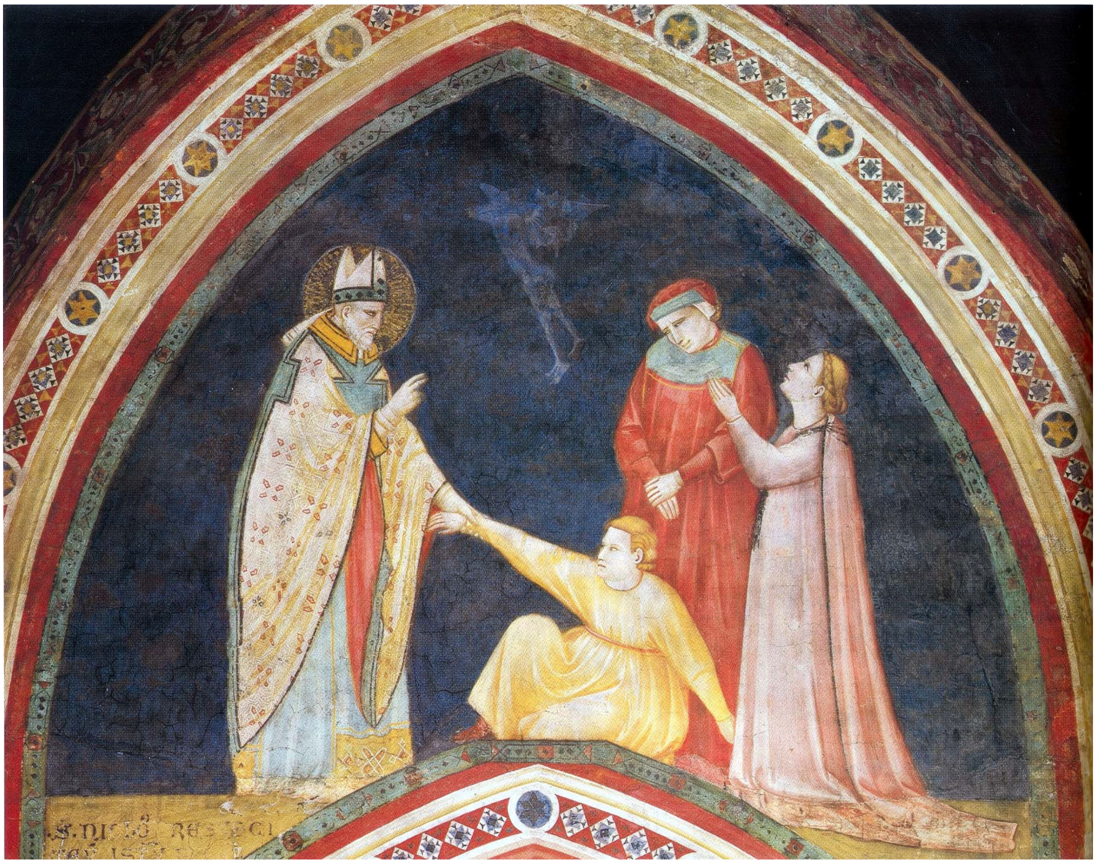

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Figure 2.68: Fra Angelico, *Scenes from the Life of St Nicholas*, detail of *Guidalotti Altarpiece*, 1437, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Vatican City, centre predella panel.

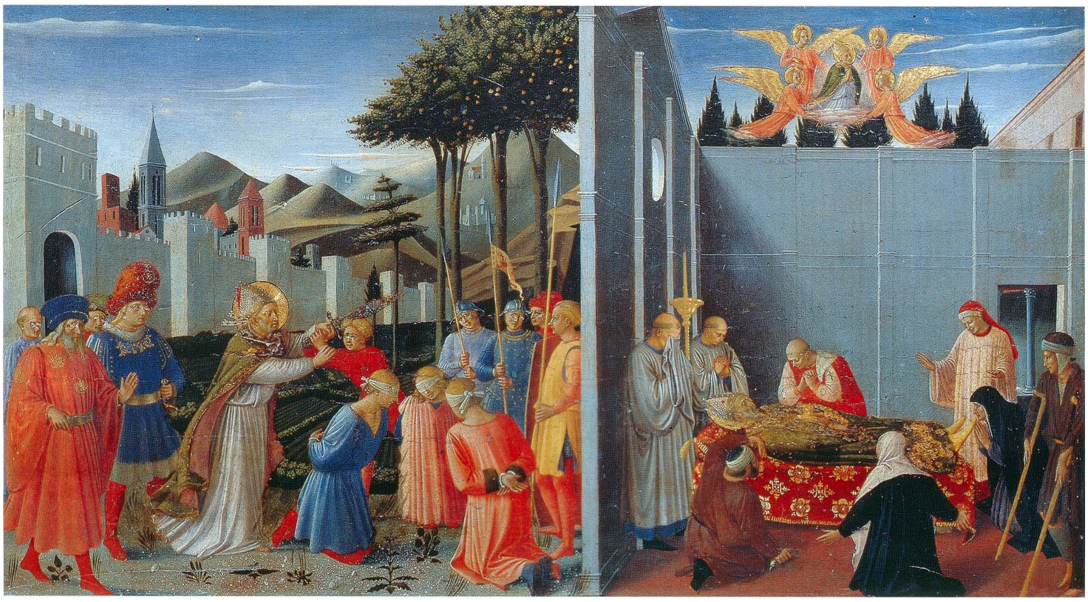

Figure 2.69: Fra Angelico, *Scenes from the Life of St Nicholas*, detail of *Guidalotti Altarpiece*, 1437, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Vatican City, right predella panel.

Figure 2.70: *Praxis de Stratelates: St Nicholas Appears to Emperor Constantine* and *The Three Generals in Prison*, 1297-1311, fresco, Chapel of St Nicholas, Lower Church of S. Francesco, Assisi, east wall.

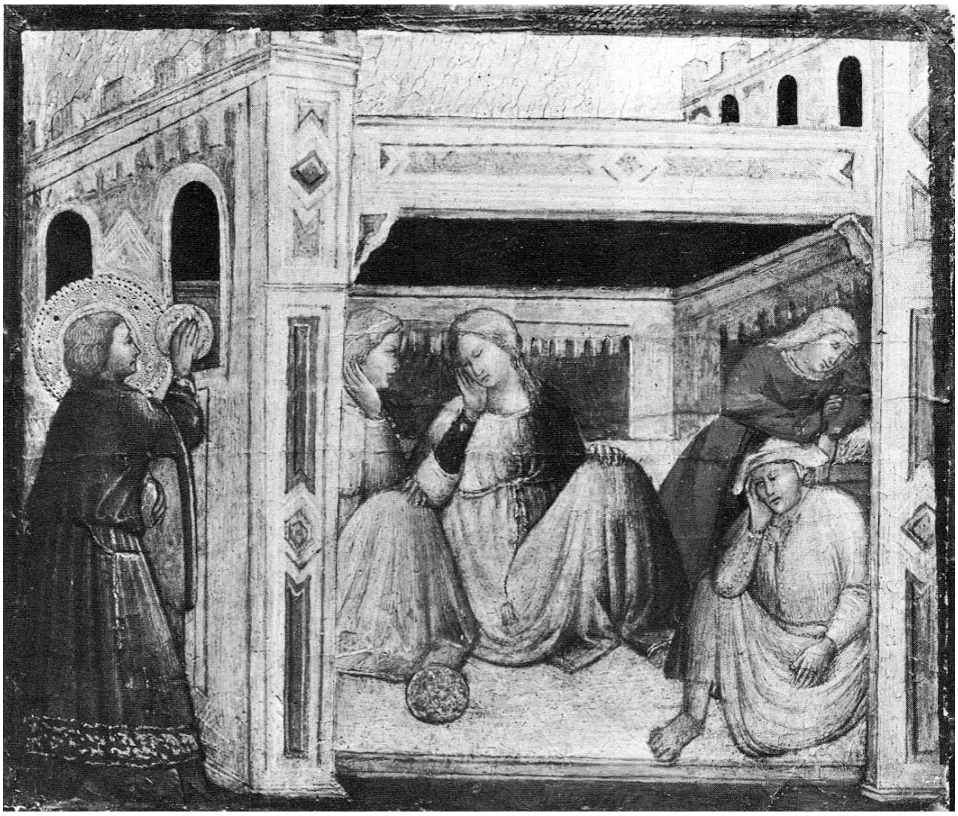

Figure 2.71: Agnolo Gaddi, *The Three Destitute Maidens*,
c.1395, tempera on panel, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

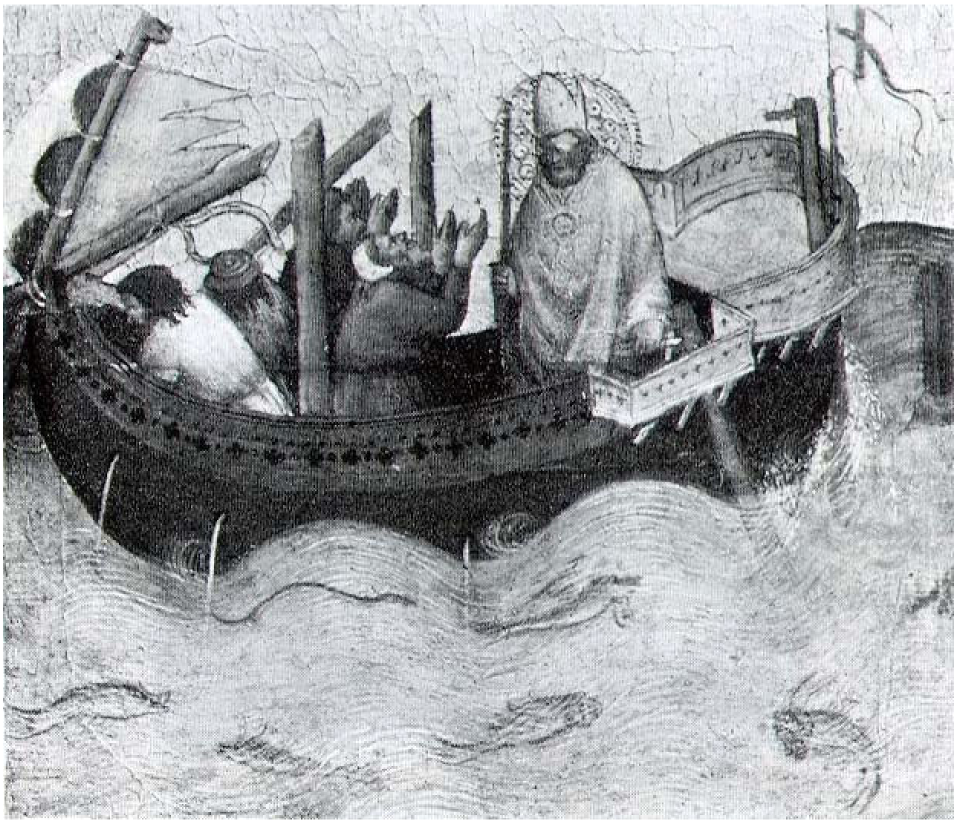

Figure 2.72: Agnolo Gaddi, *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*,
c.1395, tempera on panel, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

Figure 2.73: Taddeo Gaddi, *Virgin and Child with Scenes from the Life of Christ and St Nicholas*, 1335, tempera on panel, Staatliche Museum, Berlin.

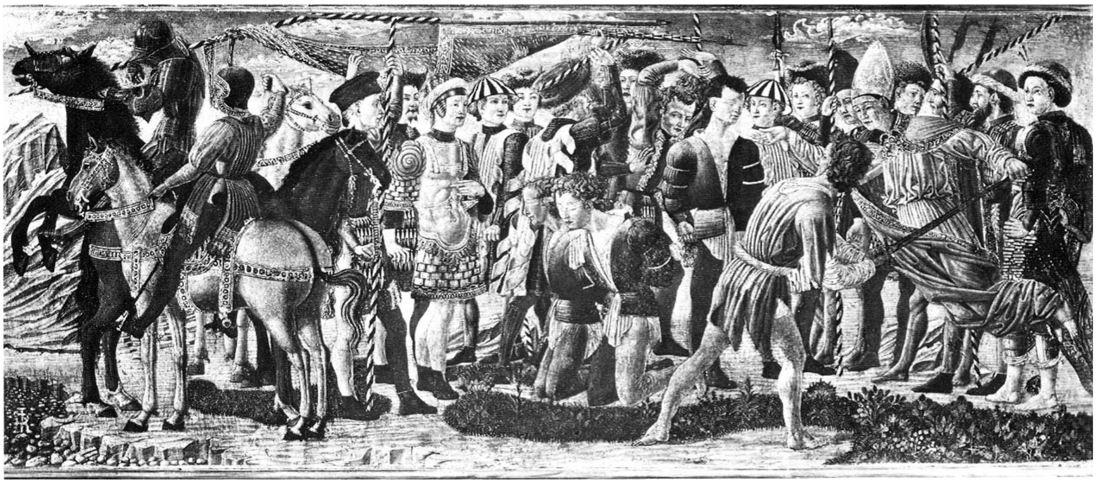

Figure 2.74: Alessio Baldivonetti*, Praxis de Stratelates: St Nicholas Rescues Three Condemned Generals from Execution*, fifteenth century, oil on canvas, Casa Buonarroti, Florence.

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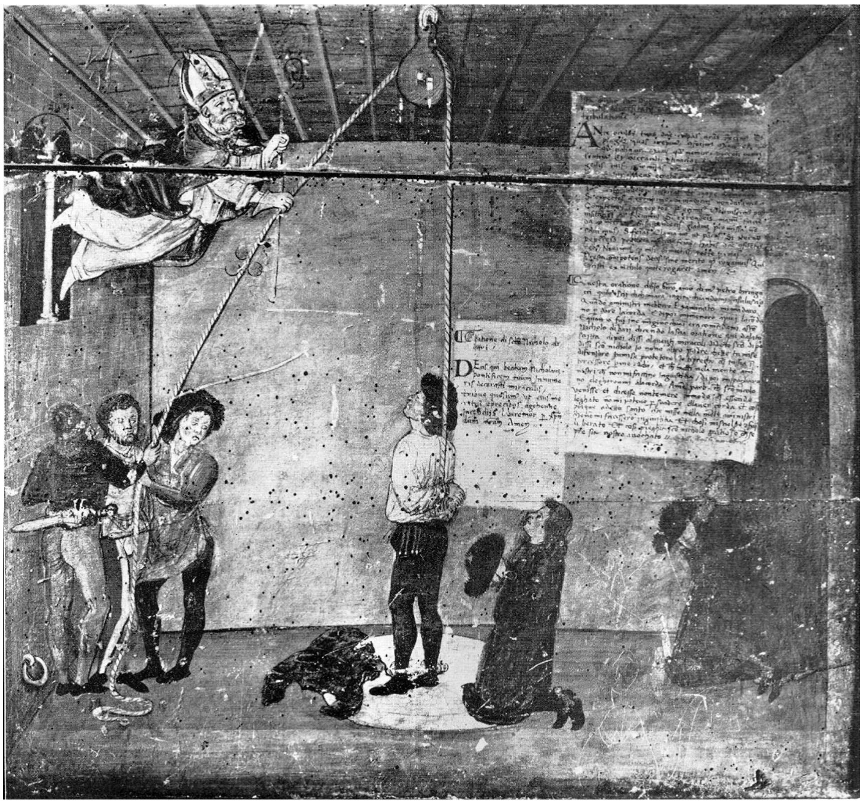
Figure 2.79: Gentile da Fabriano, *The Miracle of the Tomb*, 1425, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.



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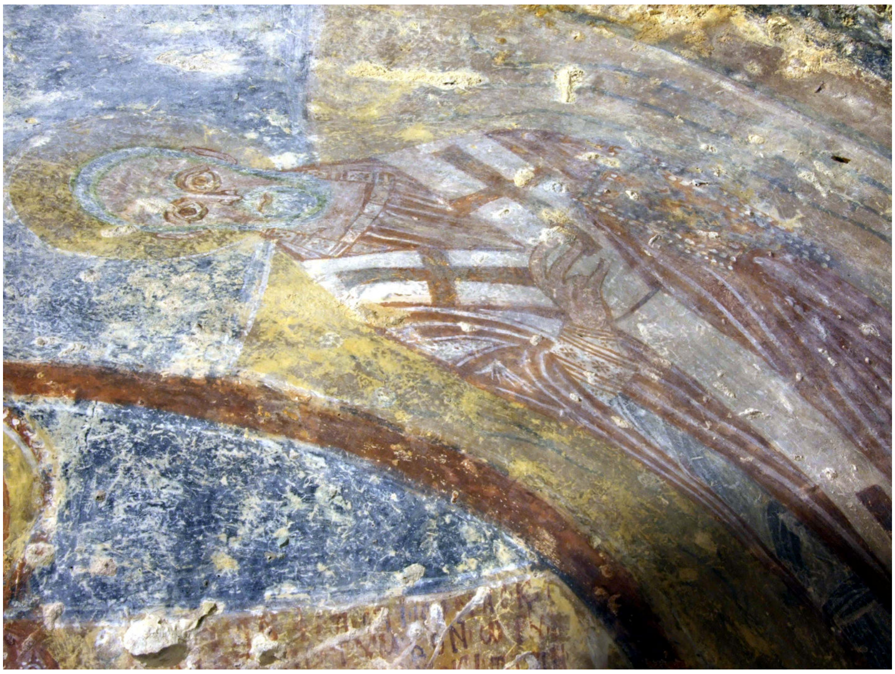

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Figure 3.24: *St Michael*, fourteenth century, fresco, Church of S. Stefano, Soleto, north wall. Author's photograph.

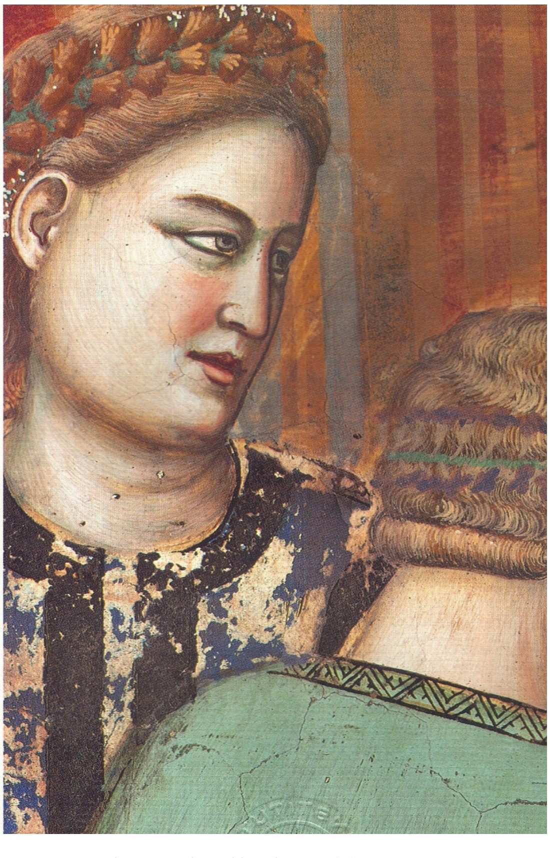

Figure 3.25: Giotto, detail of *Wedding at Cana*, c.1305, fresco, Arena Chapel, Padua, chancel.

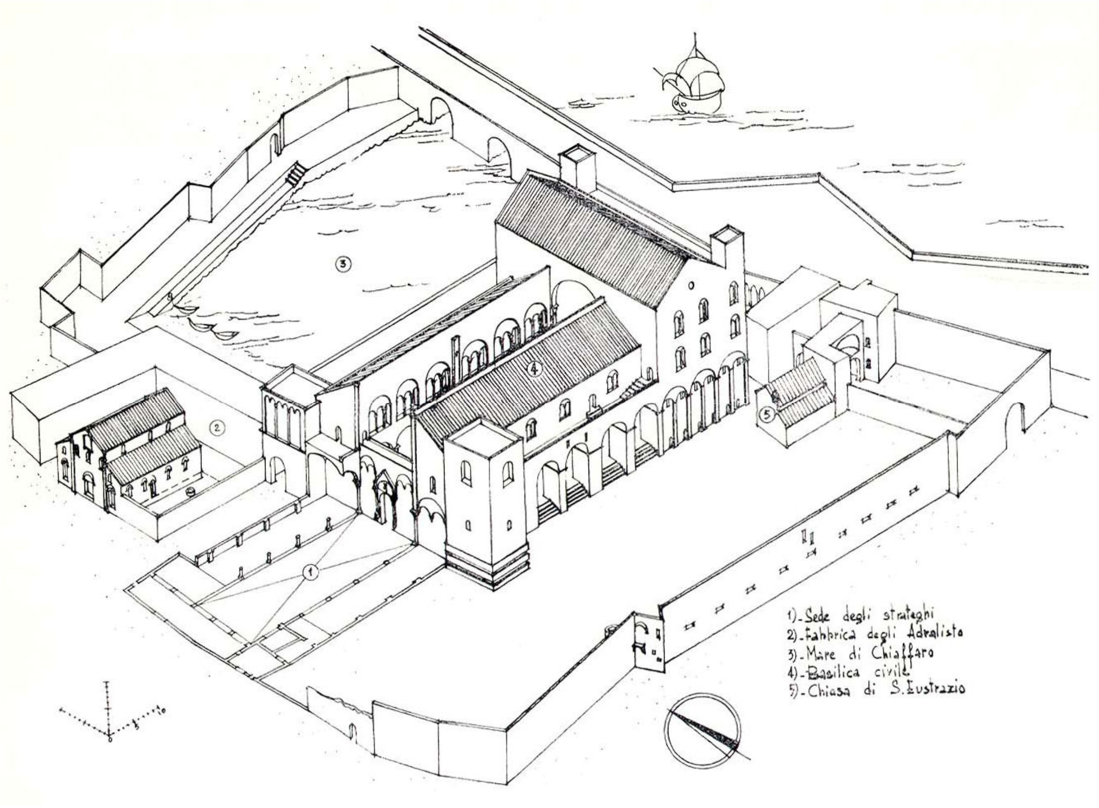

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Figure 3.28: *Teaching Angel*, Byzantine period, Church of S. Nicola, Bari, displayed on the east wall of the south apse.

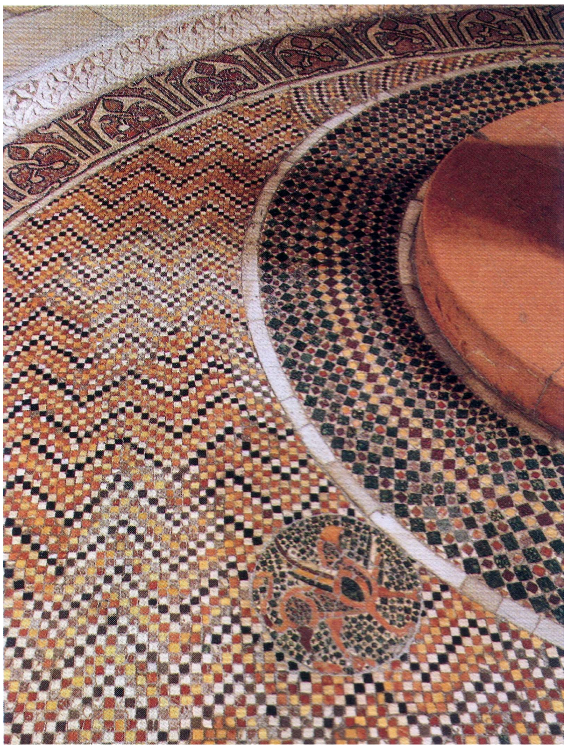

Figure 3.29: Floor mosaic showing Arabic motifs, eleventh century, Church of S. Nicola, Bari, main apse.

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Figure 3.34: *The Three Destitute Maidens*, detail of *St Nicholas with Scenes from his Life*, thirteenth century, fresco, Church of Sta Maria Maggiore, Monte S. Angelo, west wall. Photograph courtesy of Donal Cooper.

Figure 3.35: *Adeodatus* (?) (top scene), detail of *St Nicholas with Scenes from his Life*, thirteenth century, fresco, Church of Sta Maria Maggiore, Monte S. Angelo, west wall. Photograph courtesy of Donal Cooper.

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Figure 3.42: Cathedral of Bari, view of the east façade window showing columns supported by elephants. Author's photograph.

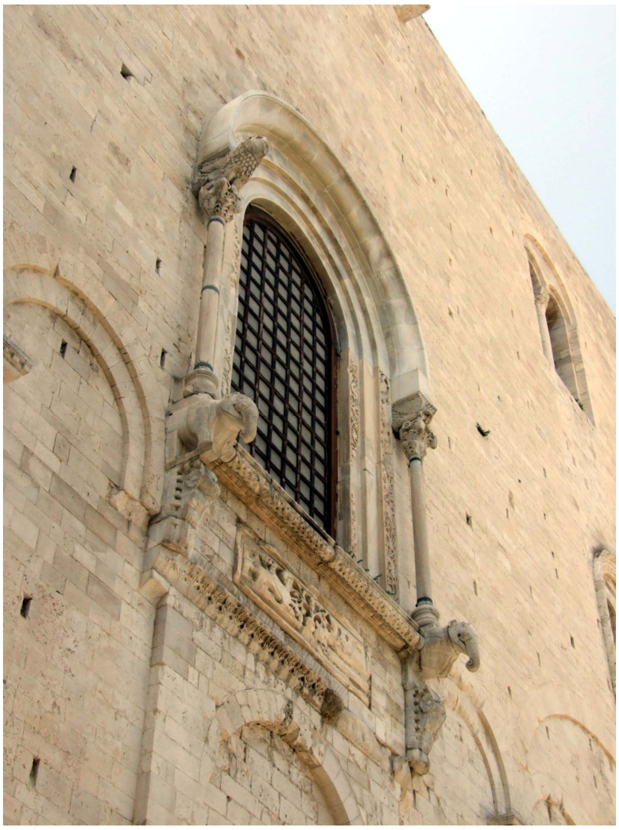


Figure 3.43: Church of S. Nicola, Bari, view of the east façade window showing columns supported by elephants. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.44: Cathedral of Bari, view of the interior showing the east end.
Author's photograph.

Figure 3.45: Church of S. Nicola, Bari, view of the interior showing the east end.
Author's photograph.

Figure 3.46: Cathedral of Bari, view of the interior showing
the east end with ciborium. Author's photograph.

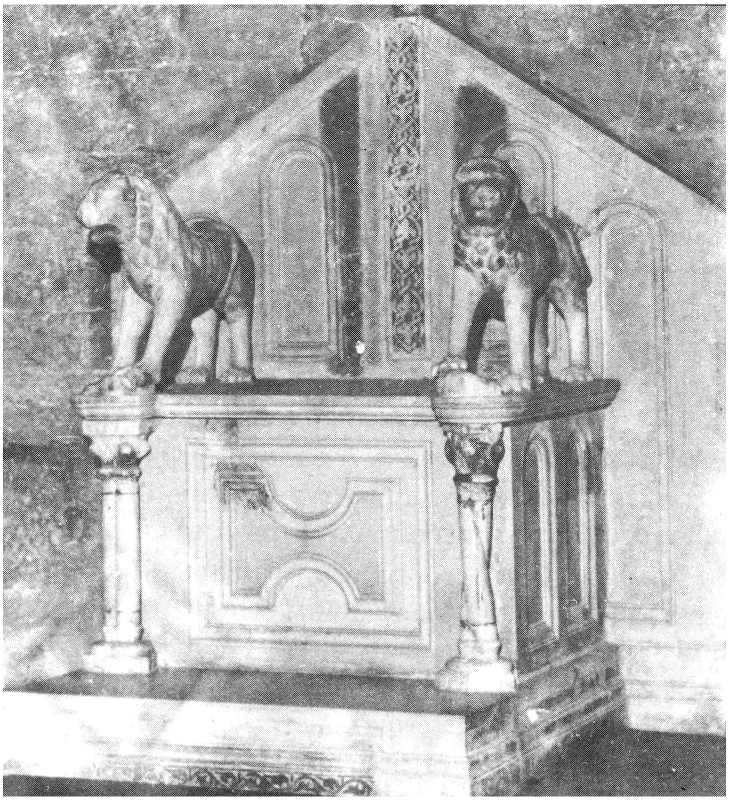


Figure 3.47: Cathedral of Bari, interior view of the main apse with the bishop's chair.

Figure 3.48: Church of S. Nicola, Bari, interior
view of the main apse with the bishop's chair.

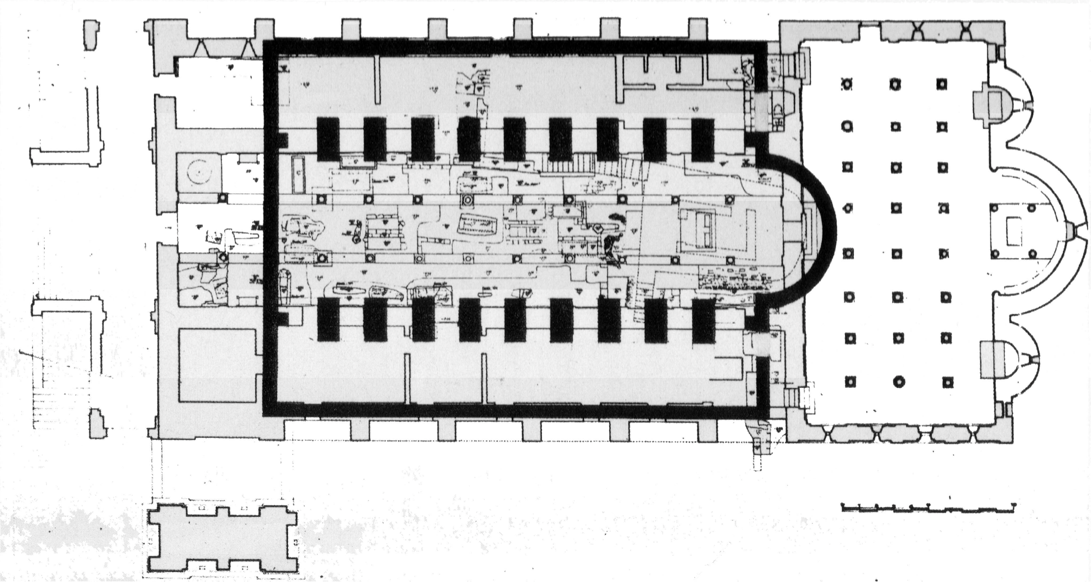


Figure 3.49: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, plan showing the Crypt of St Leucius, the Lower Church of S. Maria della Scala, and the Upper Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino.

Figure 3.50: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, exterior view of the west façade. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.51: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, exterior view of the east façade showing the large transept. Author’s photograph.

Figure 3.52: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, Lower Church of Sta Maria della Scala, interior view looking east. Author’s photograph.

Figure 3.53: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, exterior view of the west façade showing the entrance ramp to the Upper Church. Author's photograph.

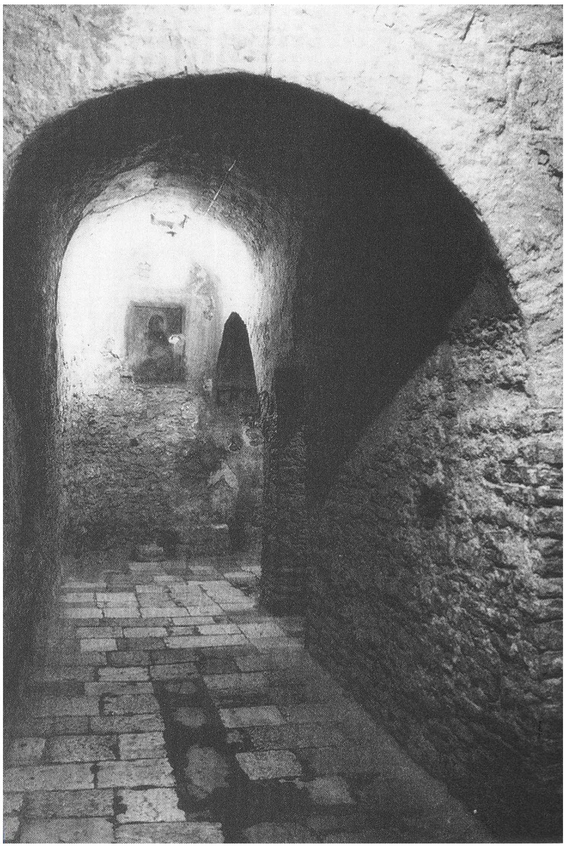


Figure 3.54: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani,
Crypt of St Leucius, interior view looking east.

Figure 3.55: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, crypt,
interior view looking east. Author's photograph.

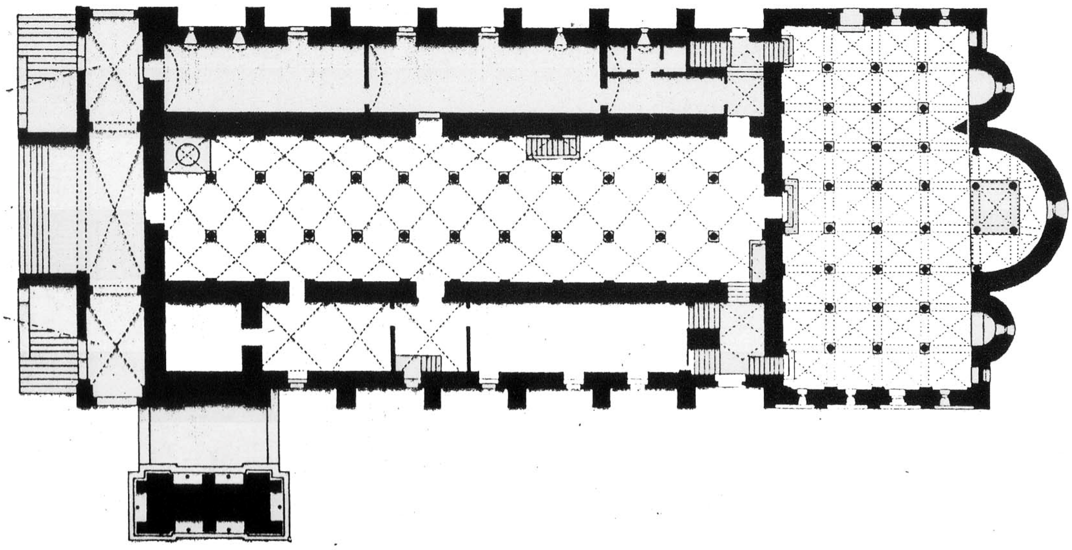


Figure 3.56: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, plan of the Upper and Lower Churches of S. Nicola Pellegrino and Sta Maria della Scala.

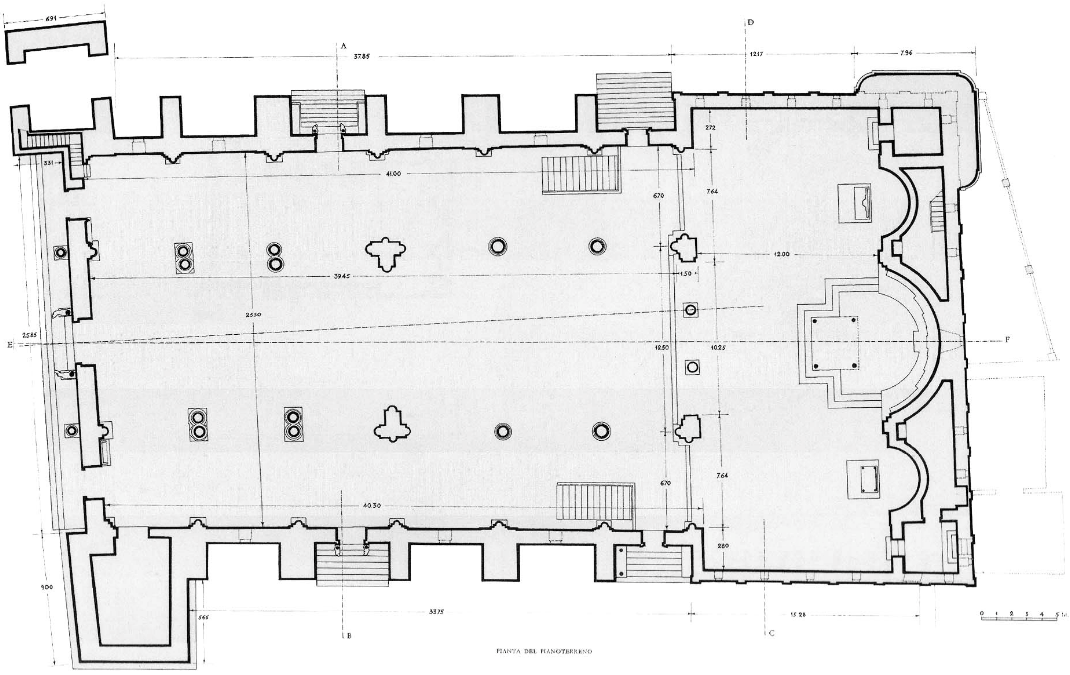


Figure 3.57: Church of S. Nicola, Bari, plan.

Figure 3.58: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, Upper Church, view of the interior looking east. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.59: Church of S. Nicola, Bari, view of the interior looking east. Author's photograph.

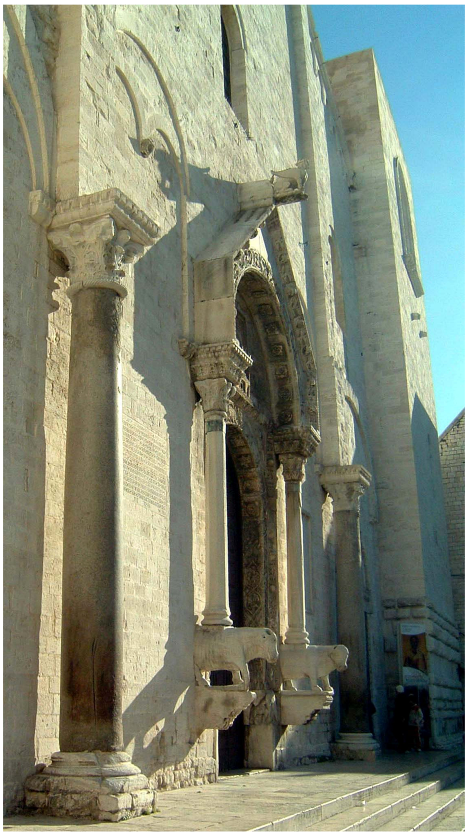


Figure 3.60: Church of S. Nicola, Bari, exterior view of the western portal showing columns resting on large animals. Author's photograph.

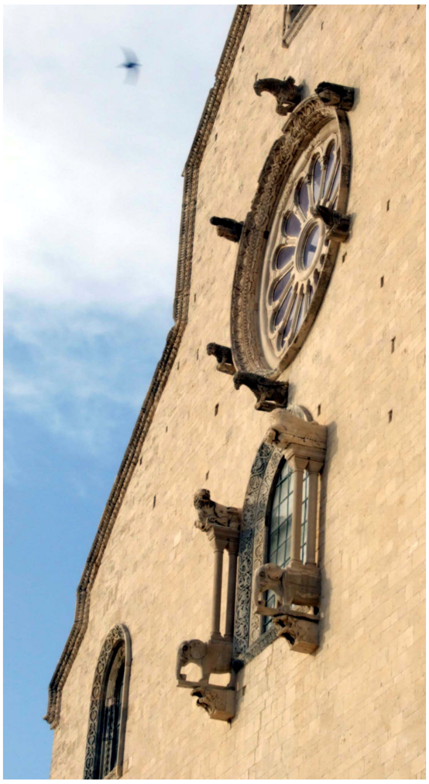


Figure 3.61: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, exterior view of the west façade showing the rose window surrounded by animals and the central window with columns resting on elephants. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.62: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, exterior view of the east façade window surrounded by sculpted animals. Author’s photograph.

Figure 3.63: *Winged Horse*, detail of the tomb of the de Branchi family, marble, Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani.

Figure 3.64: Capital with *Winged Lion*, Church of S. Nicola, Bari, crypt. Author’s photograph.

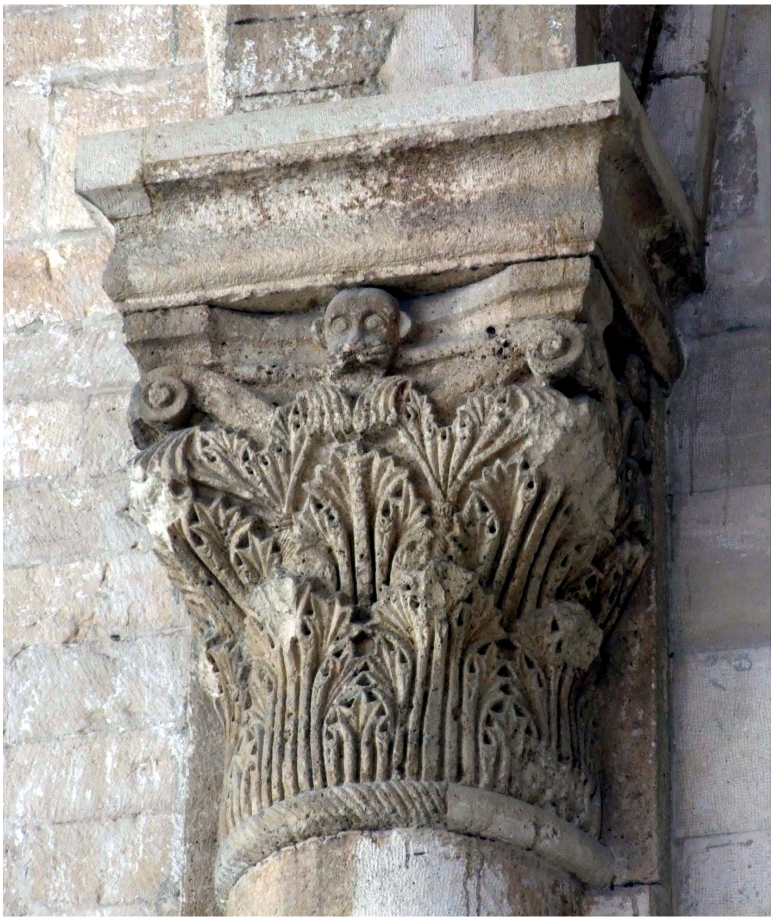


Figure 3.65: Capital, Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, nave. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.66: Capital, Church of S. Nicola, Bari, nave. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.67: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, exterior view of the south façade showing the articulated arching on the nave and the blind arching on the transept. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.68: Church of S. Nicola, Bari, exterior view of the south façade showing the articulated arching on the nave and the blind arching on the transept. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.69: Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, exterior view of the west façade showing the remains of the portico. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.70: Cathedral of Barletta, exterior view of the west façade. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.71: *St Nicholas the Pilgrim with Scenes from his Life*, thirteenth century, tempera on panel, Museo Diocesano, Trani.

Figure 3.72: *St Nicholas the Pilgrim Saving a Ship in a Storm* (detail of Fig.3.71), thirteenth century, tempera on panel, Museo Diocesano, Trani.

Figure 3.73: *St Margaret with Scenes from her Life*, thirteenth century, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Provinciale, Bari.

Figure 3.74: *Alexander the Great*, late-eleventh or early-twelfth century, mosaic, Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, apse floor. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.75: *Alexander the Great*, 1163-65, mosaic, Cathedral of Otranto, nave floor. Author's photograph.

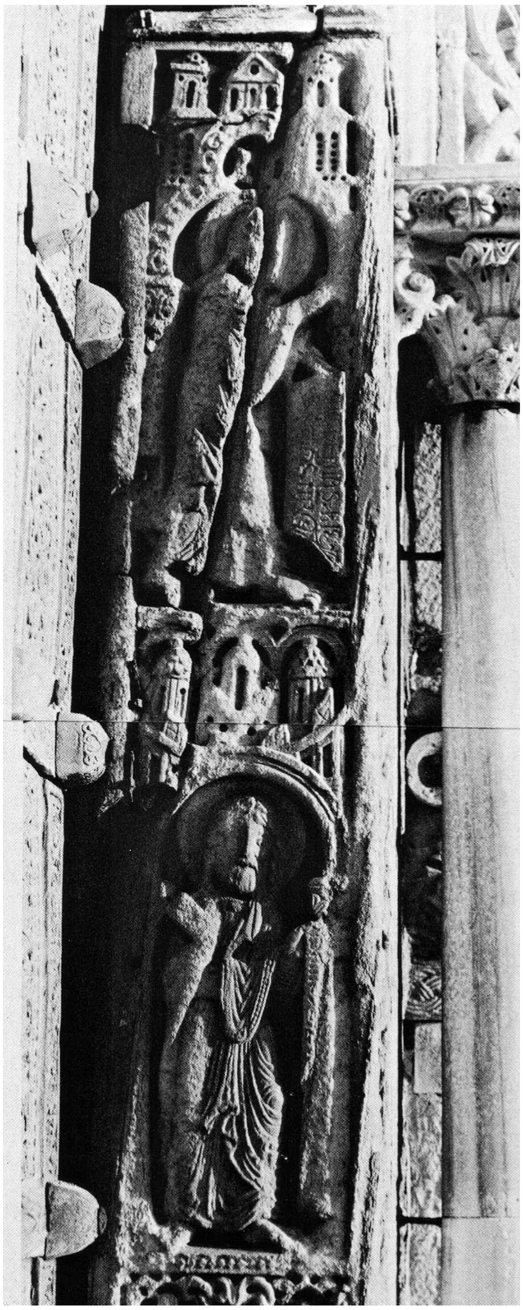


Figure 3.76 (left): *St Jacob Sleeping* and *Prophets*, c.1199, stone carving from a portal jamb, Museum of Dubrovnik.

Figure 3.77 (right): *Prophets*, late-twelfth century, Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, right-hand side of the main portal.

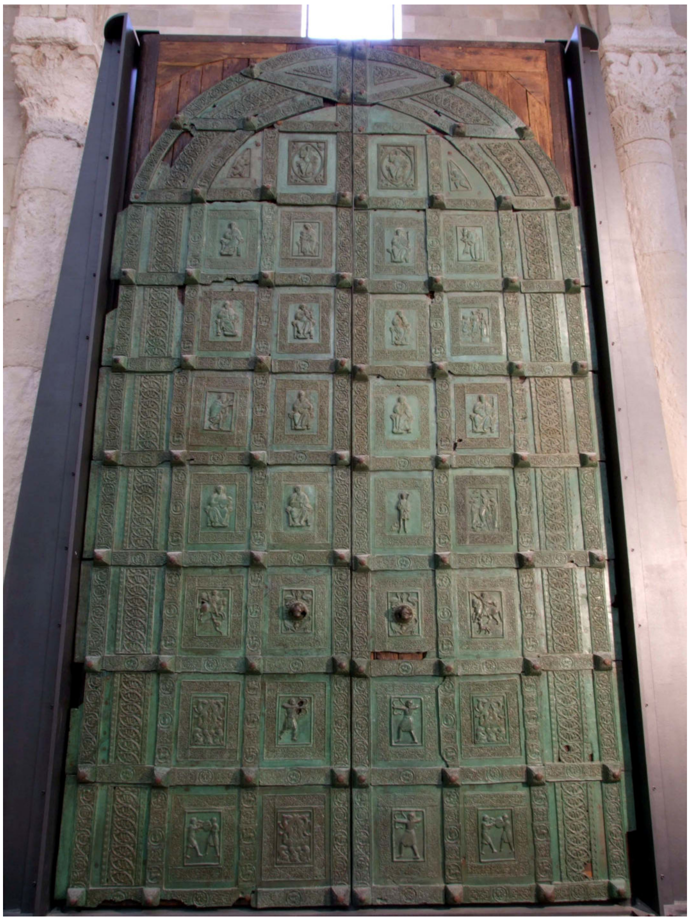


Figure 3.78: Bronze doors, 1179-86, Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, now displayed in the nave. Author’s photograph.

Figure 3.79: *St Nicholas the Pilgrim*, detail of the bronze doors, 1179-86, bronze relief, Church of S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani. Author’s photograph.

Figure 3.80: *St Leucius and St Nicholas the Pilgrim*, 1180, drawing after a lead seal, Archivio di S. Nicola Pellegrino, Trani, from Engel (1972), p.109.

Figure 3.81: *St Nicholas the Pilgrim*, thirteenth century, stone relief, Museo Diocesano, Trani.

Figure 3.82: *St Nicholas the Pilgrim*, thirteenth or fourteenth century, fresco, Crypt of the Candelora, Massafra, south wall. Author's photograph.

Figure 3.83 (left): Giovanni di Francia *St Nicholas the Pilgrim*, fifteenth century, fresco, Church of Sta Maria di Giano, Bisceglie, location unknown.

Figure 3.84 (right): Giovanni di Taranto, *St Nicholas the Pilgrim*, thirteenth century, fresco, Church of S. Nicola, Bari, south apse.

Figure 3.85: Giovanni di Taranto, *St Nicholas the Pilgrim*, thirteenth century, fresco, Church of Masseria Iesce, Altamura, location unknown.

Figure 3.86: Giovanni di Taranto, detail of *St Nicholas the Pilgrim*, thirteenth century, fresco, Church of Masseria Iesce, Altamura, location unknown.

Figure 4.1: Church of S. Marco, Venice, interior view of the
main apse showing the inscription and four state saints.

Figure 4.2 (left): *St Nicholas*, detail from the *porta di S. Clemente*,
c.1080, bronze, Church of S. Marco, Venice, south façade.

Figure 4.3 (right): *St Nicholas*, before 1093, mosaic, Church of S. Marco, Venice, apse.

Figure 4.4: Church of S. Marco, Venice, interior view of the south dome from below.

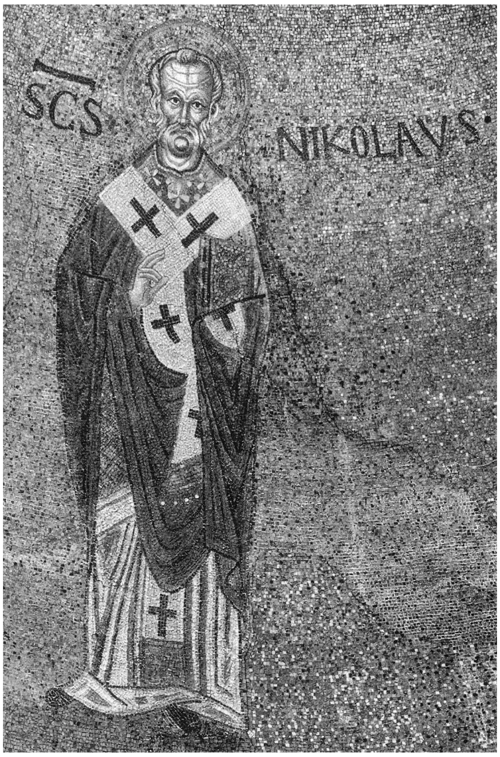


Figure 4.5: *St Nicholas*, late-twelfth century, mosaic,
Church of S. Marco, Venice, south dome.

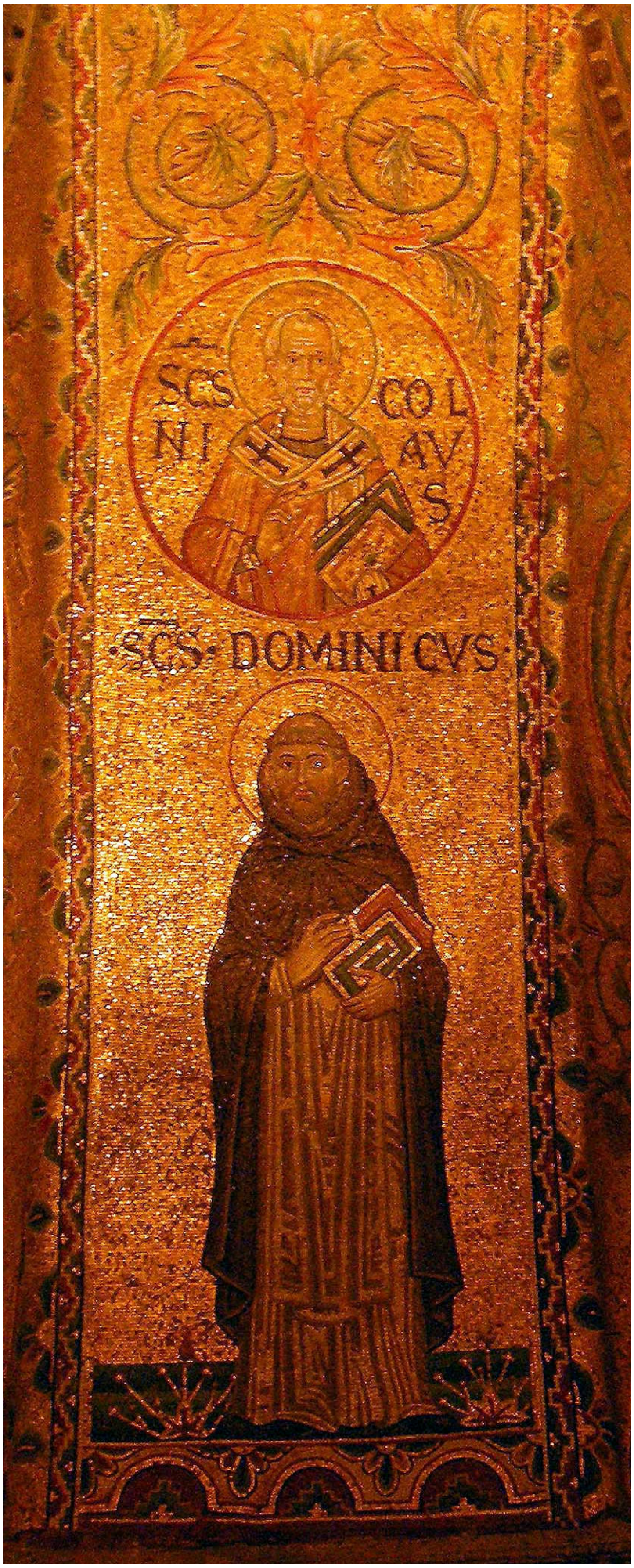


Figure 4.6: *St Nicholas* and *St Dominic*, mid-thirteenth century, mosaic, Church of S. Marco, Venice, atrium. Author’s photograph.

Figure 4.7: Porto S. Alipio, Church of S. Marco, Venice, west façade. Author’s photograph.

Figure 4.8: Church of S. Nicolò, Treviso, exterior view of the east end.

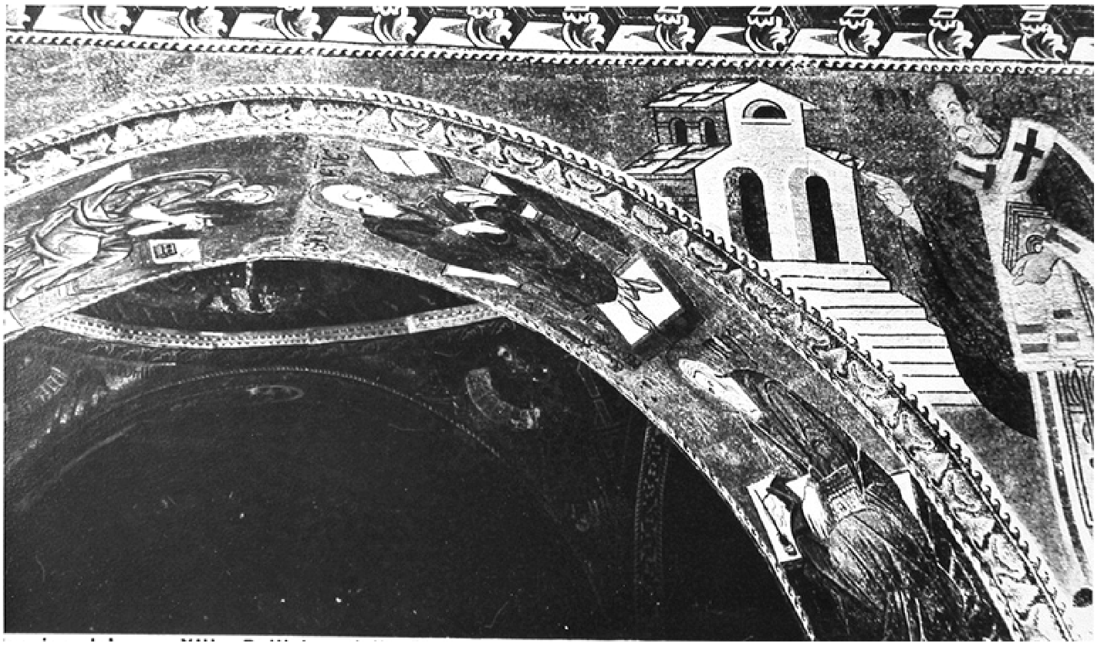


Figure 4.9: *St Nicholas*, mid-fourteenth century, mosaic, baptistery of the Church of S. Marco, Venice, east wall arch spandrel.

Figure 4.10: *Deesis with St John the Baptist, Virgin and Child, and St Nicholas*, 1355, mosaic, Chapel of St Isidore, Church of S. Marco, Venice, west wall.

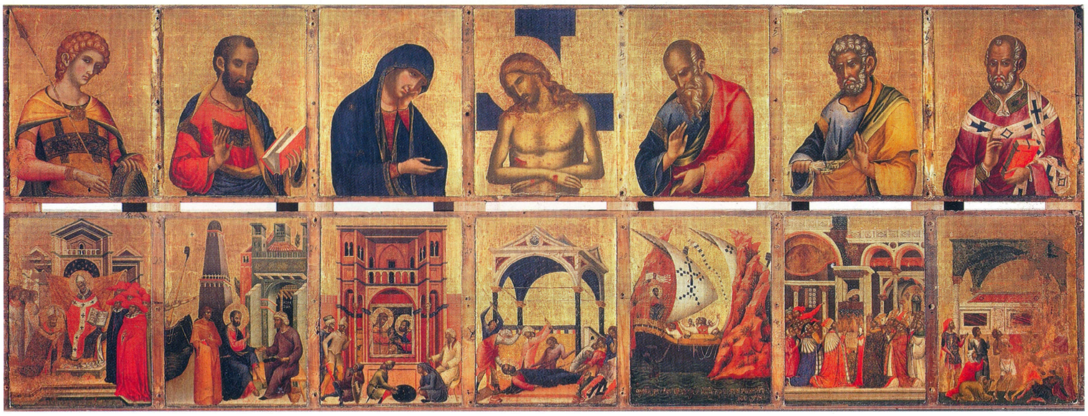


Figure 4.11: Paolo Veneziano and sons, *Pala Feriale*, 1345,
oil on panel, Church of S. Marco, Venice, apse.

Figure 4.12: Paolo Veneziano and sons, *St Nicholas* (detail of Fig. 4.11),
Pala Feriale, 1345, oil on panel, Church of S. Marco, Venice, apse.

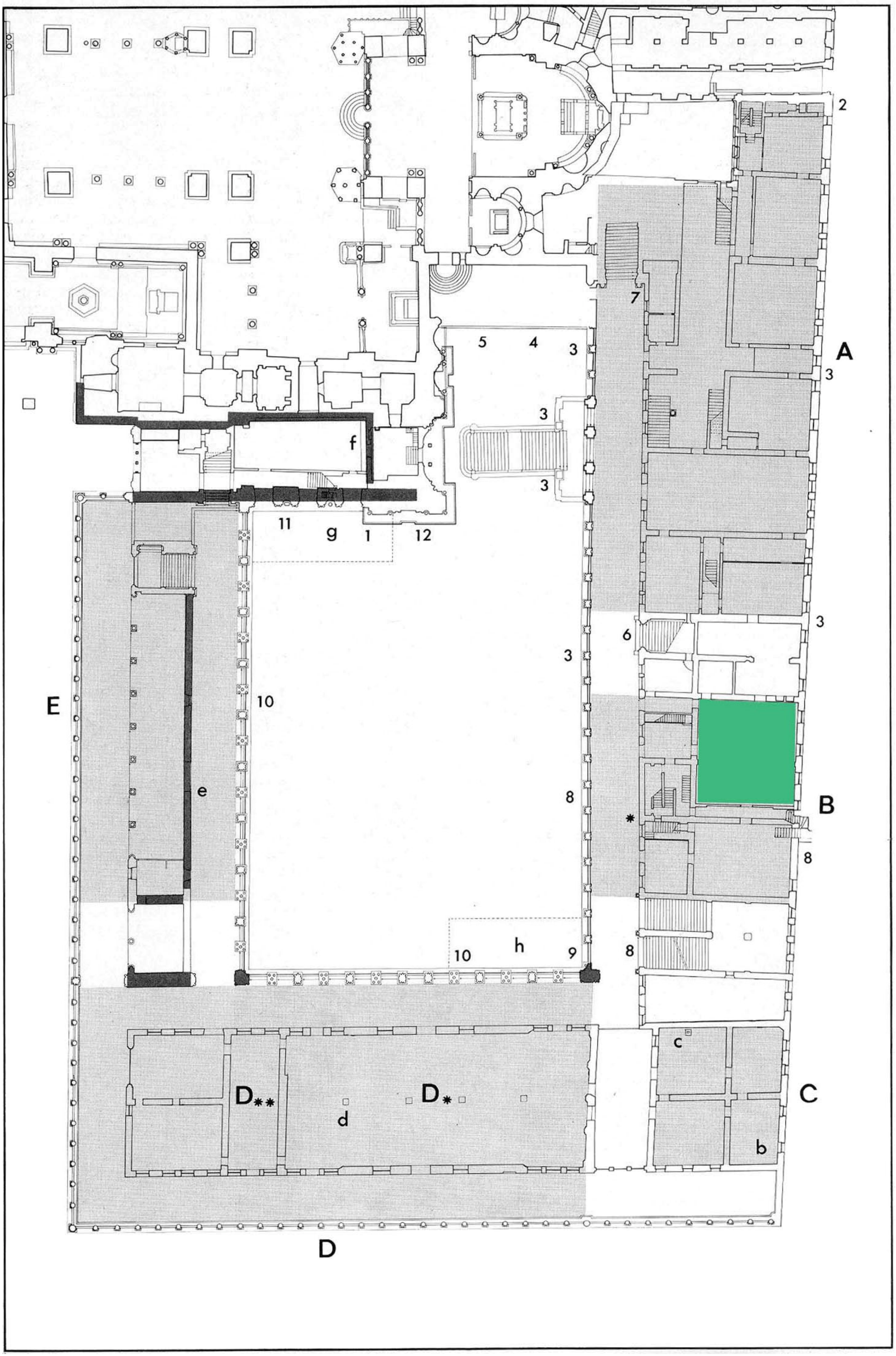


Figure 4.13: Doge’s Palace, Venice, plan of the ground level showing the location of the Chapel of St Nicholas (shaded green), from Samonà, et al, eds (1970), p. 112.

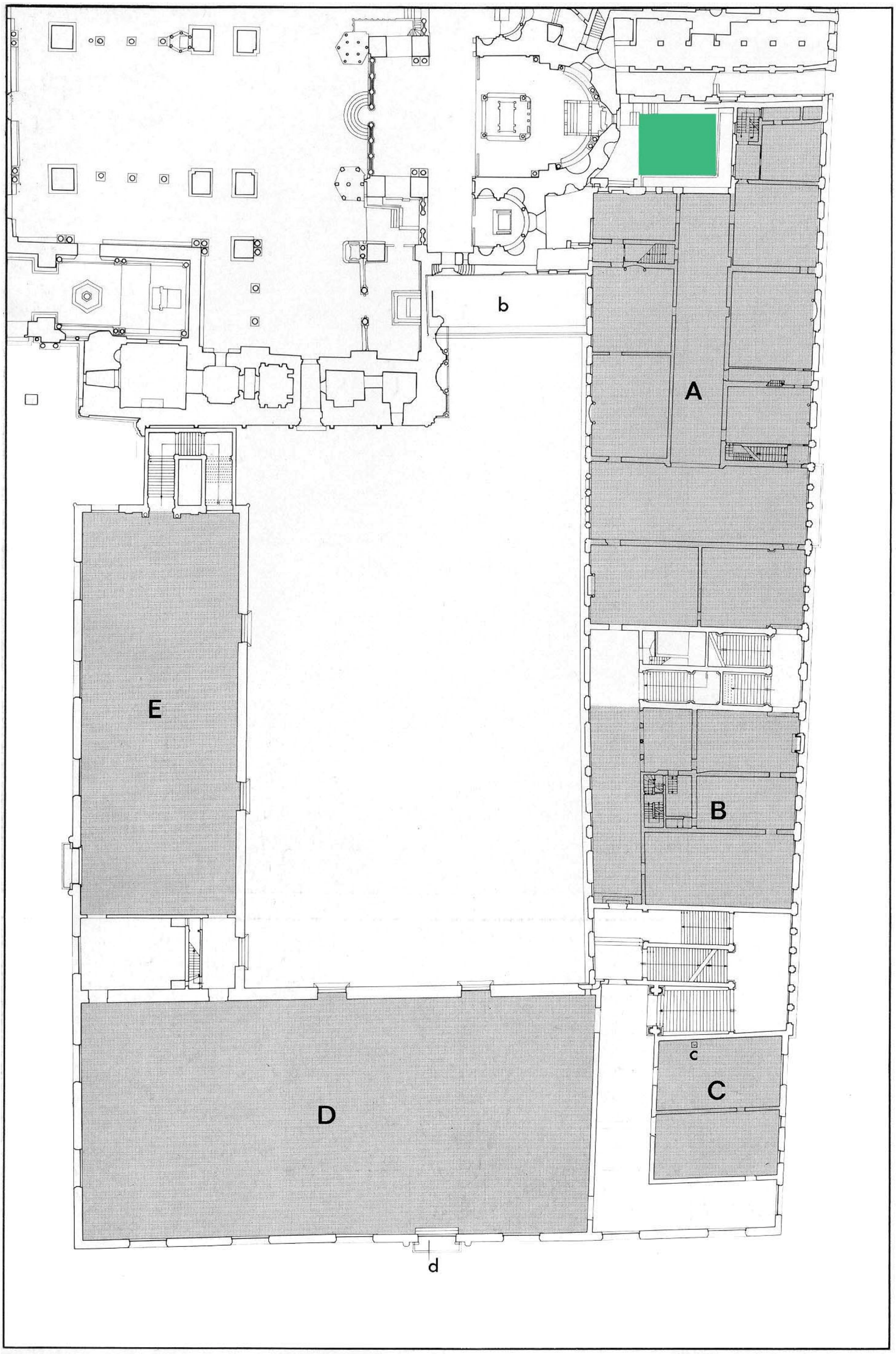


Figure 4.14: Doge’s Palace, Venice, plan of the second level showing the location of the Chapel of St Nicholas (shaded green), from Samonà, et al, eds (1970), p. 114.

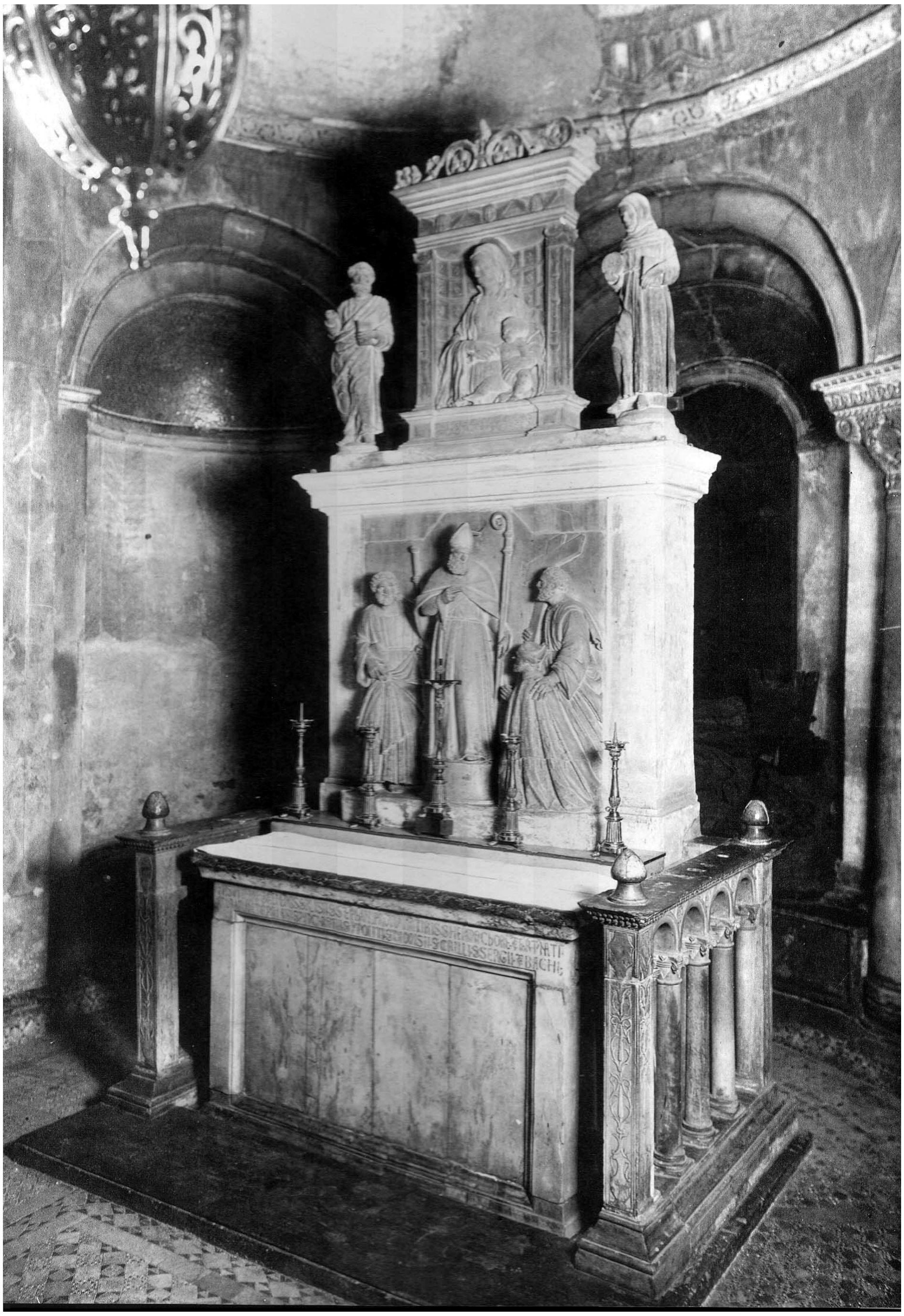


Figure 4.15: *St Nicholas with Doge Andrea Gritti*, 1523, marble relief, Church of S. Marco, Venice, Chapel of S. Clemente.

Figure 4.16: Paolo Veneziano, *The Birth of St Nicholas*,
1340-45, oil on panel, Uffizi Galleries, Florence.

Figure 4.17: *Pope Alexander III and Emperor Frederick II Making Peace*, fourteenth century, manuscript illumination, Museo Correr, Venice.

Figure 4.18: Church of S. Nicolò di Lido, Venice, external view of the west façade. Author's photograph.

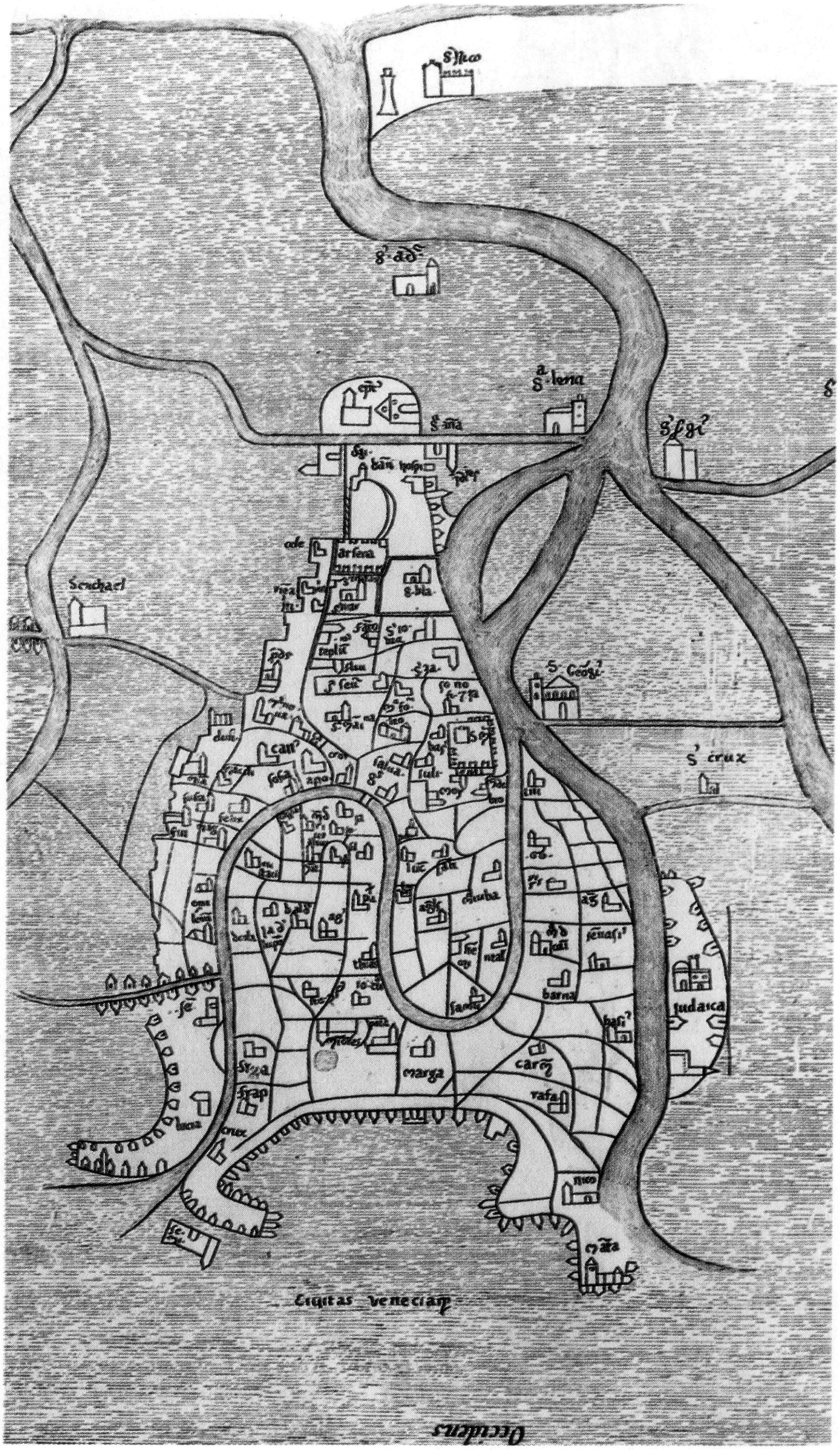


Figure 4.19: Paolino da Venezia, *Map of the City of Venice*, drawn after Tommaso Temanza from the parchment codex *Chronologia magna*, 1376, Museo Correr, Venice.

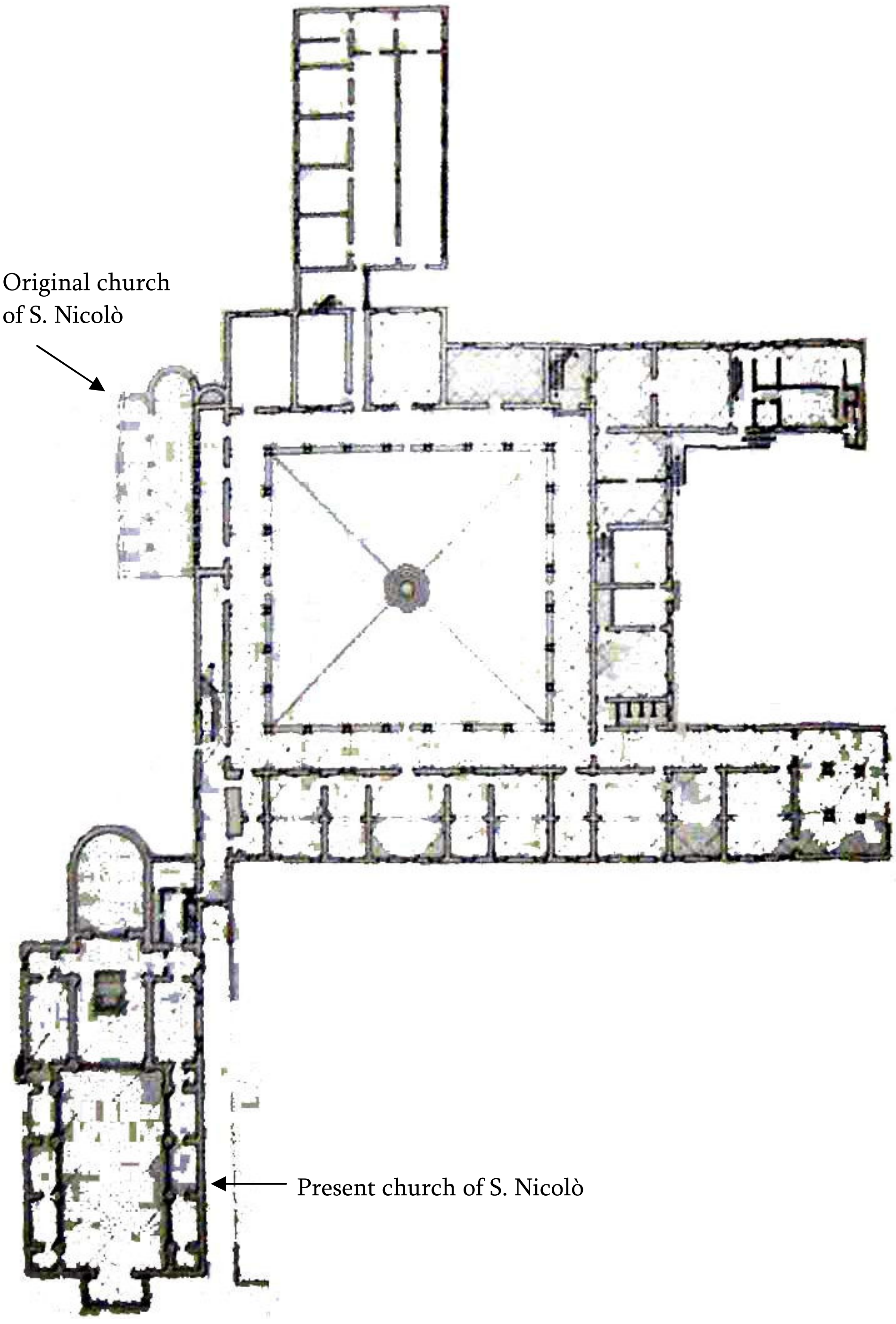


Figure 4.20: Church of S. Nicolò di Lido, Venice, plan showing the position of the original church in relation to the present church and monastery.

Figure 4.21: Church of S. Nicolò di Lido, Venice, exterior view of the south façade showing the eleventh-century columns from the original church.

Figure 4.22: Monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido, Venice, eleventh-century acanthus-leaf columns from the original church, now located at the entrance to the present monastery. Author's photograph.

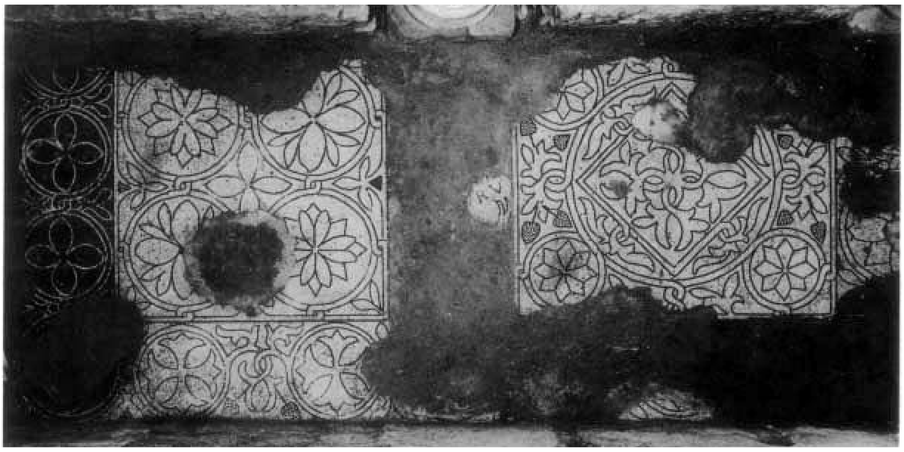


Figure 4.23: Nave pavement, eleventh century, mosaic, from the south nave of the original Church of S. Nicolò di Lido, now displayed at the Monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido, Venice.

Figure 4.24: Decorative frieze, eleventh century, marble, from the original Church of S. Nicolò di Lido, now displayed at the Monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido, Venice.

Figure 4.25: *Eagle*, eleventh century, terracotta, from the original Church of S. Nicolò di Lido, now displayed at the Monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido, Venice. Author's photograph.

Figure 4.26: *Prayer in the Garden*, eleventh century, fresco, from the original Church of S. Nicolò di Lido, now displayed at the Monastery of S. Nicolò di Lido, Venice.

Figure 4.27: *Prayer in the Garden*, thirteenth century, mosaic, Church of S. Marco, Venice, south wall of the west arm.

Figure 4.28: *Pope Alexander III Giving Doge Sebastiano Ziani the Ring*, fourteenth century, manuscript illumination, Museo Correr, Venice.

Figure 4.29: Castel S. Angelo, Venice. Author’s photograph.

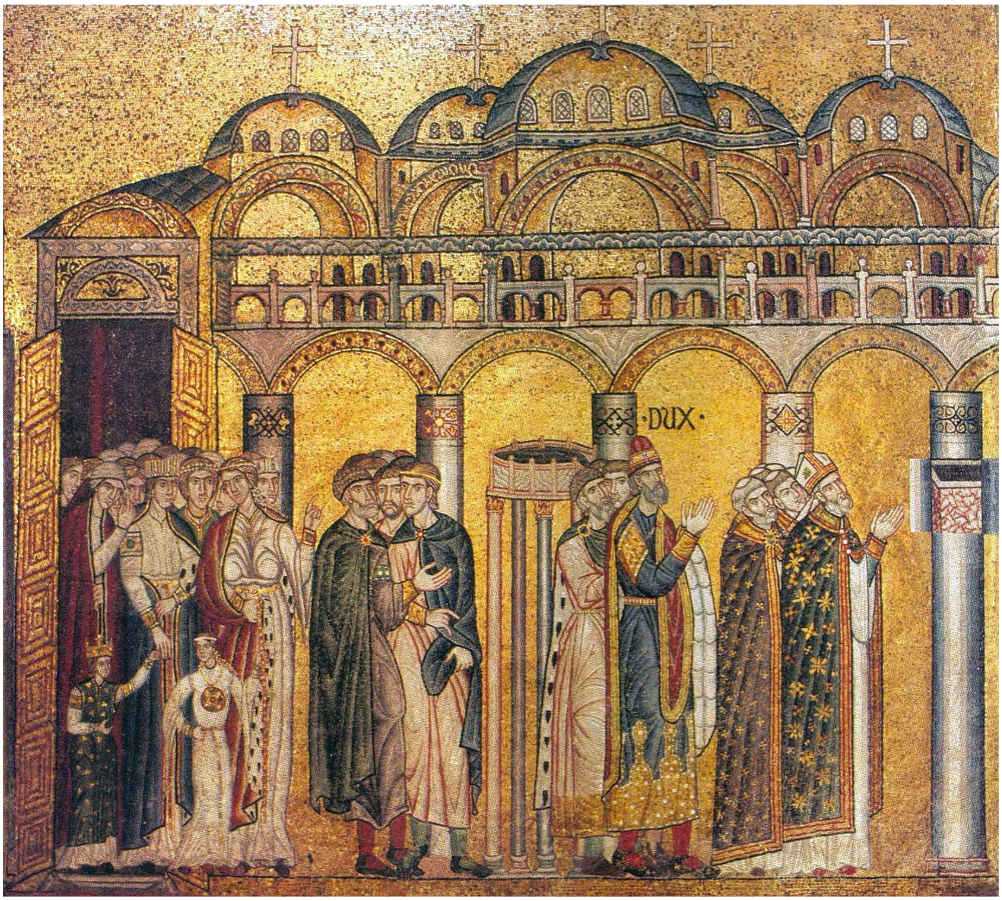


Figure 4.30: *Apparitio*, mid-thirteenth century, mosaic, Church of S. Marco, Venice, west wall of the south transept.

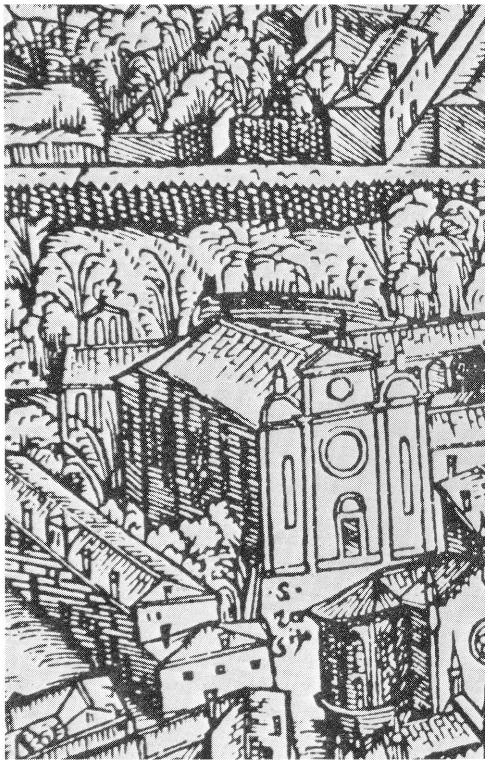


Figure 4.31: Jacopo de Barbari, detail of *Map of Venice* showing the Convent of S. Nicoletto, 1500, woodcut print, British Museum, London.

Figure 4.32: Archivio di Stato, Venice, exterior view of the main entrance.
Author’s photograph.

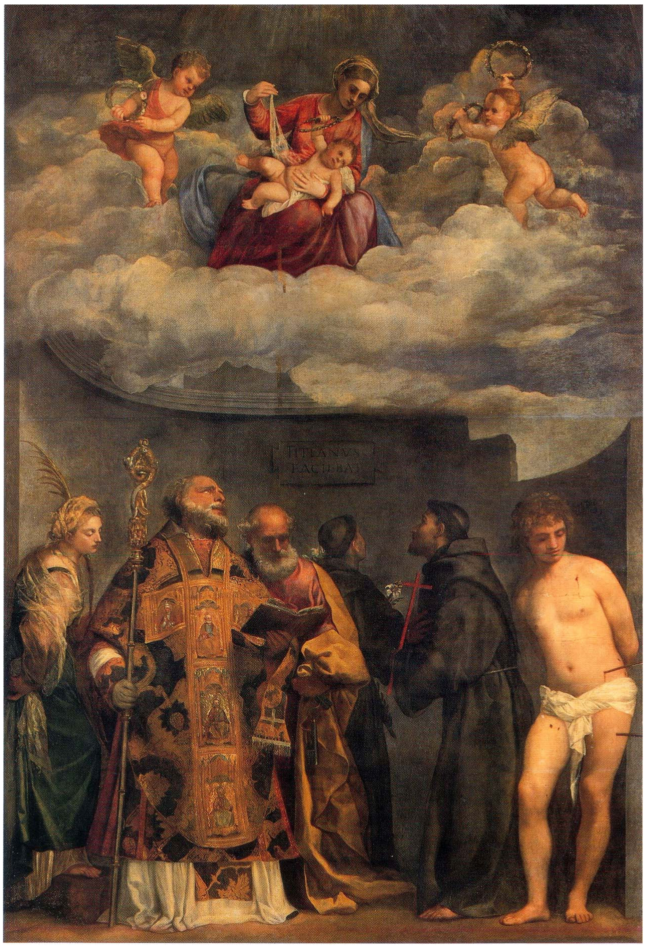


Figure 4.33: Titian, *St Nicholas Altarpiece*, c.1520-25,
oil on panel, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Vatican City.

Figure 4.34: Lorenzo Veneziano, *St Nicholas Saving a Ship in a Storm*, late 1360s, oil on panel, Hermitage, St Petersburg.

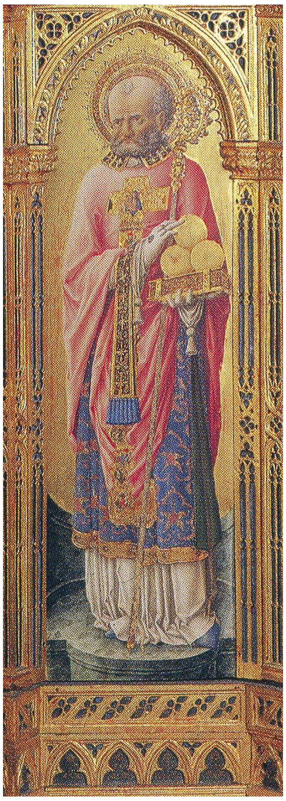
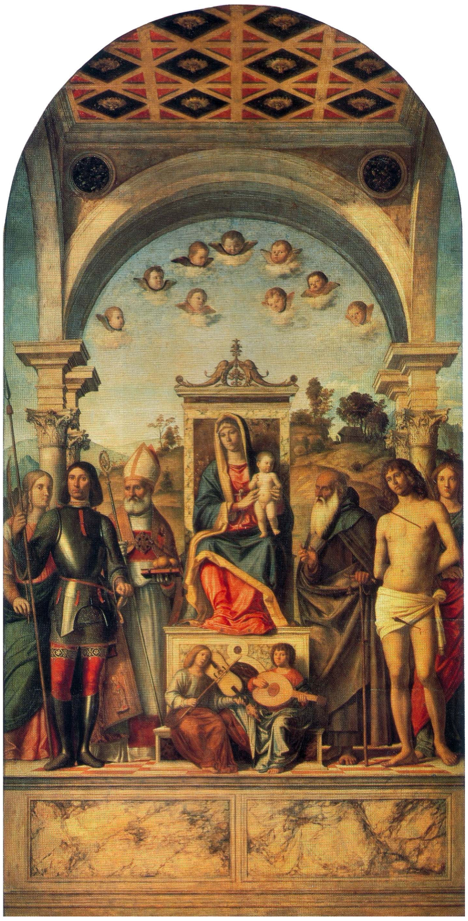


Figure 4.35: Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini, detail of *Certosa Polyptych*, 1450, oil on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna.

Figure 4.36: Giovanni Bellini, *Pesaro Altarpiece*, 1488, oil on wood, sacristy of the Convent of Sta Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice. Author's photograph.



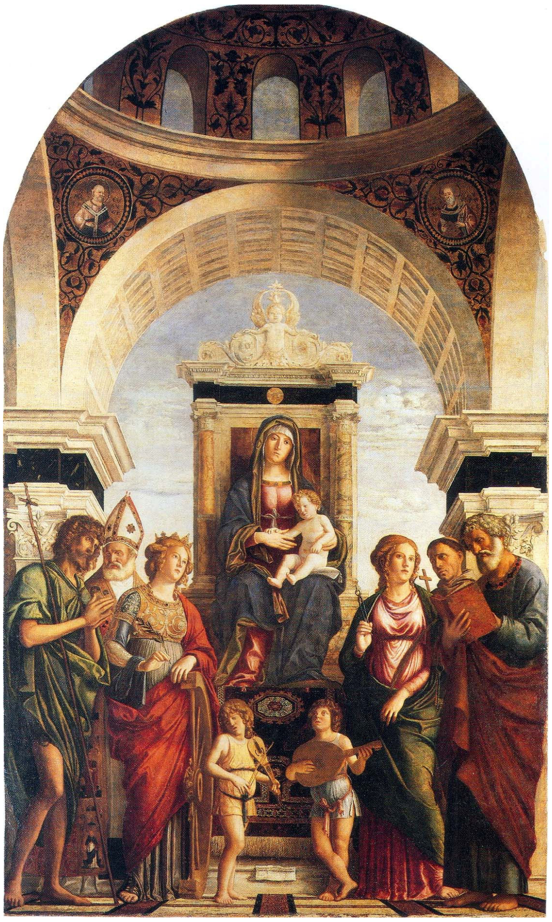


Figure 4.37 (left): Cima da Conegliano, *Dragan Altarpiece*, c.1499-1501, oil on panel, Accademia, Venice.

Figure 4.38 (right): Cima da Conegliano, *Conegliano Altarpiece*, 1492-93, oil on panel, Cathedral of Conegliano.

Figure 4.39: Church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, Venice, exterior view of the north and west façades. Author's photograph.

Figure 4.40: Church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, Venice, view of the interior looking east. Author's photograph.

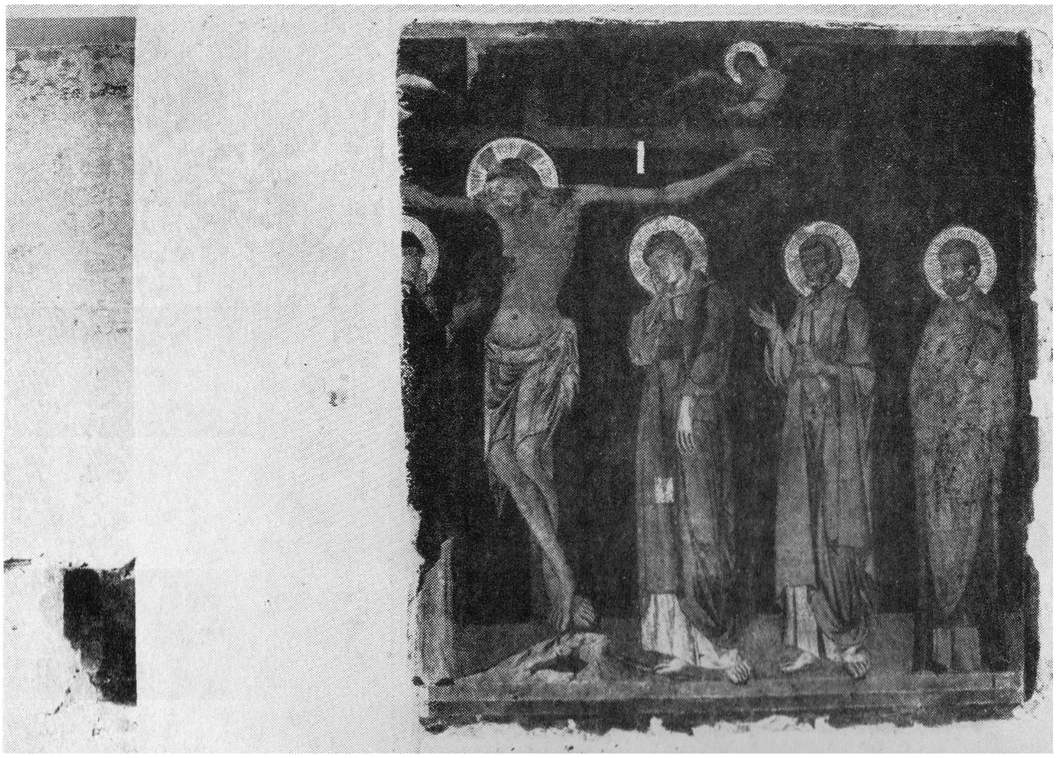


Figure 4.41: *Crucifixion*, fourteenth century, fresco, Church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, Venice, located in a room adjacent to the church behind the north apsidal area.

Figure 4.42: *St Nicholas*, here dated after the second half of the thirteenth century, stone relief, Church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, Venice, west façade. Author's photograph.

Figure 4.43: *St Nicholas* and *St Nicetus*, 1361, sculpted column, Church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, Venice, north colonnade of the central nave. Author's photograph.

Figure 4.44: *St Nicholas*, fifteenth century, gilded and painted wood, Church of S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, Venice, apse. Author’s photograph.

Figure 4.45: *Lion*, date unknown, sculpted column, Campo S. Nicolò dei Mendicoli, Venice. Author's photograph.

Figure 4.46: Piazzetta S. Marco, view looking south, with the doge's palace and the column with *Winged Lion*.

Figure 5.1: Pietro da Rimini, *St Nicholas Appearing to the Parents of St Nicholas of Tolentino*, c.1310-48, fresco, Cappellone of St Nicholas of Tolentino, Tolentino, east wall.

Figure 5.2: Cappellone of St Nicholas of Tolentino, Tolentino, view of the interior showing the east and north walls.

Figure 5.3: Pietro da Rimini, *St Nicholas of Tolentino Saving a Ship in a Storm*, c.1310-48, fresco, Cappellone of St Nicholas of Tolentino, Tolentino, north wall.